UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/131/Add.1
25 July 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-second session
Item 87 of the provisional agenda*

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the attached periodic report covering the period from 1 January to 30 April 1997, which was submitted to him, in accordance with paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of Assembly resolution 51/131 of 13 December 1996, by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

29 May 1997

Sir,

The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories has the honour to transmit to you herewith, in accordance with paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of General Assembly resolution 51/131 of 13 December 1996, a periodic report updating information contained in the periodic report adopted and presented to you on 19 February 1997 (A/52/131). The present periodic report has been prepared in order to bring to your attention, and to the attention of the General Assembly, updated information on the human rights situation in the occupied territories.

The present periodic report covers the period from 1 January to 30 April 1997. It is based on written information gathered from various sources among which the Special Committee has selected relevant excerpts and summaries, which are reflected in the report.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Herman Leonard de SILVA
Chairman of the Special Committee to
Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting
the Human Rights of the Palestinian
People and Other Arabs of the
Occupied Territories

His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 51/131 of 13 December 1996, the General Assembly:

"5. Requests the Special Committee, pending complete termination of the Israeli occupation, to continue to investigate Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, especially Israeli lack of compliance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and to consult, as appropriate, with the International Committee of the Red Cross according to its regulations in order to ensure that the welfare and human rights of the peoples of the occupied territories are safeguarded and to report to the Secretary-General as soon as possible and whenever the need arises thereafter;

"6. Also requests the Special Committee to submit regularly to the Secretary-General periodic reports on the current situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem;

"7. Further requests the Special Committee to continue to investigate the treatment of prisoners in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967."

2. The Special Committee continued its work under the rules of procedure contained in its first report to the Secretary-General and held the second of its series of meetings from 30 May to 9 June 1997 at Geneva, Cairo, Amman and Damascus. Mr. Herman Leonard de Silva (Sri Lanka) continued to be Chairman. The meetings were also attended by Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal) and Dato' Abdul Majid Mohamed (Malaysia).

3. Section II of the present report describes the situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel as it affects the human rights of the civilian population. The information contained in the report reflects written information received by the Special Committee during the period from 1 January to 30 April 1997. The Special Committee has followed the situation in the occupied territories on a day-to-day basis through reports appearing in the Israeli press and in the Arab-language and English-language newspapers published in the occupied territories. It has also examined a number of communications and reports from Governments, organizations and individuals pertaining to the period covered by the report.

4. The geographical names and the terminology employed in the present report reflect the usage in the original sources and do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Special Committee or the Secretariat of the United Nations.

II. INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

A. General situation

1. General developments and policy statements

5. On 2 January 1997, the League of Arab States (LAS) called for an international mechanism to be established in order to protect the Arab civilian population in the occupied Palestinian and Arab lands against terrorist attacks by Israeli settlers. In a special statement released one day after a shooting incident in Hebron, the League called for the disarming of settlers in Palestinian lands and urged the United States of America and the Russian Federation, co-sponsors of the peace process, as well as the European Union (EU) to demand that Israel implement the agreements it signed with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Recalling the Hebron massacre in 1994, the League expressed its indignation over and condemnation of the criminal incident in Hebron on 1 January in which an Israeli soldier had opened fire on Arab civilians. This criminal action, the statement claimed, proved the "fragility" of security in Hebron and other Palestinian lands, which required an international mechanism to protect Palestinians against terrorist attacks by Israeli settlers. (Ha'aretz, 3 January)

6. On 7 January, the Peace Now movement held a vigil at Baruch Goldstein's grave in the Kiryat Arba settlement to protest against what it described as the turning of the grave into a holy site, which was leading others to follow Goldstein's example. Goldstein's grave was located in the Meir Kahane Park at the entrance to the settlement. The grave is surrounded by a tiled floor and prayer bookcases as well as a tap for ritual hand washing have also been installed. The tombstone on the grave refers to Goldstein as a "martyr". Goldstein killed 29 Muslims and wounded 125 in the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque) in 1994. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 8 January)

7. On 10 January, it was reported that the Israeli Ministry of the Interior would proceed in accordance with the decision adopted by the Israeli High Court and withdraw the identity cards of all Palestinians from Jerusalem who lived outside the municipal boundaries or who resided in neighbouring Arab countries. A similar ruling applied to Palestinians living abroad for seven years or more. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

8. On 10 January, it was reported that the Palestinian Authority had decided to set up a fund in order to develop and defend Palestinian land. The fund, to be known as the Land Fund, would make money available for farmers and villagers for the upkeep of their property and the development of their land, in particular that located near settlements, or land the Government of Israel wanted to expropriate for settlement purposes. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

9. On 10 January, the Israeli Minister of the Interior, Eli Suissa, indicated that a plan to confiscate the Jabal Abu Ghneim area near Jerusalem had been prepared. He denied reports that the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, had decided to postpone plans to build 6,500 housing units on the southern outskirts of Jerusalem and north of Bethlehem. Together with Maaleh

Adumim, which lies east of Jerusalem, a settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim would close the ring of settlements around Jerusalem. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

10. On 15 January, the partial redeployment of Israeli troops from Hebron started in a fairly quiet atmosphere. Israeli soldiers left 80 per cent of the city and were replaced by the Palestinian police force. Additional Israeli troops took up positions in the heart of Hebron to protect the 400 Jewish settlers who are to remain in the city. Tension rose later in the day when Palestinians threw stones at Jewish settlers. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 and 24 January)

11. On 16 January, after a 12-hour debate, the Knesset endorsed the Hebron redeployment agreement by a vote of 87 to 17 with one abstention. In his concluding speech, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated that he believed the decision was the right one in view of current realities and added that he hoped to see future peace agreements with the Palestinians and with Arab States. He stressed, however, that his Government would preserve and consolidate the settlement in Hebron, which he described as being the city of the forefathers and the rock of Jewish existence. He stated further that his Government's goals were to "preserve the unity of Jerusalem, to guarantee the right of Jews to settle in their land and to offer the Palestinians reasonable self-rule arrangements which excluded sovereignty". (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 17 January)

12. On 17 January, the town of Hebron was officially handed over to the Palestinian Authority. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 19 January)

13. On 18 January, the French daily newspaper Le Figaro quoted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as stating that the future of Jerusalem would never be negotiated. The newspaper quoted the Prime Minister as stating that he could envision a Palestinian State, provided that the term "State" was carefully defined to protect Israeli interests and security. "We neither want to govern the Palestinians nor interfere with their existence", stated Netanyahu, "but we do not desire to find ourselves in a position that threatens ours lives and our future". (Jerusalem Post, 19 January)

14. On 19 January, in a conciliatory speech, Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat told a crowd of some 50,000 Hebron residents that all the Israeli people had made peace with the Palestinians and that the Palestinians sought no confrontation with Hebron's Jewish settlers. Making no allusion to the fact that 20 per cent of the town was still under Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) control, Mr. Arafat repeated three times that Hebron was liberated, recalling that there were 87 votes for peace in the Knesset, something that was new in the Middle East. (Jerusalem Post, 20 January)

15. On 20 January, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu specified that Israel would continue to build settlements in the territories, including in Hebron. At a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, the Prime Minister stated that neither the Oslo Agreements nor the Hebron Agreement ruled out the continuation of construction in Judea and Samaria (West Bank). (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 January)

16. On 24 January, Palestinian sources quoted a statement attributed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stating that his Government had committed itself to releasing the Palestinian women prisoners, but did not give any specific date. There were 37 Palestinian women prisoners in Israeli jails, whose release was supposed to have taken place shortly after the signing of the Oslo II Agreement. Mr. Netanyahu denied reports that his Government had agreed to release the spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, as part of the Hebron Agreement. He stated, however, that Israel might consider releasing Yassin, depending on his health situation. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

17. On 24 January, it was reported that Palestinians reacted angrily after the Israeli Commander of the Central Area, OC Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan, threatened to send tanks into the Wadi A-Teen area near Tulkarm to make way for Israeli projects. The General's remarks came as a response to the firm stand taken by villagers of the area aimed at preventing Israeli quarries and stonecutters from being set up on their land. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

18. On 27 January, the B'tselem human rights organization requested the Military Advocate-General, Brig.-Gen. Shlomo Shaham, to open an investigation against the officer commanding IDF troops in the Hebron area on suspicion that he had prohibited his soldiers from shooting at Jews who carried out attacks. The head of B'tselem stated that evidence suggested that instructions given to IDF soldiers were that the life of a Jew who committed an attack was more important than the lives of the people he was trying to harm. (Ha'aretz, 28 January)

19. On 29 January, the Israeli Minister of the Interior, Eli Suissa, informed the Knesset that 600 identity cards had been withdrawn so far from residents of East Jerusalem. This was the first time that the Government of Israel had admitted to pursuing a policy of identity card withdrawal. In a related development, it was reported that new instructions had been given concerning the issuance of Jerusalem identity cards. New applicants first had to apply for the family reunification programme at the East Jerusalem branch of the Ministry of the Interior before officials agreed to process the forms into application forms for an identity card. The same process applied to two additional categories: persons whose identity cards were lost or stolen, and those who sought to exchange their frayed identity cards for new ones. Applicants now had to provide the same documents that applicants for family reunification were asked to produce. (The Jerusalem Times, 31 January)

20. On 30 January, Sheikh Yusuf Abu Sanina, the preacher of the Al Aqsa Mosque, declared during the fourth Friday prayers of Ramadan that Israel had no intention of restoring to the Palestinian people their legal rights and was, on the contrary, racing against time in order to turn Palestinian land and the Golan Heights into settlements, which were like a "cancer" in the heart of the Islamic nation. Sheikh Abu Sanina further charged that the Israeli authorities had declared a "psychological war" against the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem in order to drive them out of the City. He gave as an example the issuing of magnetic cards, which he claimed was aimed at preventing Palestinians from entering Jerusalem and limiting their access to its holy places. He concluded by warning that the measures taken by Israel in Jerusalem jeopardized Arab and Muslim existence there. (Ha'aretz, 2 February)

21. On 31 January, the head of the Palestinian Security Team announced that the Israeli authorities had agreed to remove all the checkpoints set up throughout the West Bank following the Palestinian-Israeli clashes in September 1996. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 February)

22. On 14 February, it was reported that the Palestinian Authority had lodged an official protest with Israel over attempts to set up a stonecutting facility in the A-Teen Valley area near Tulkarm. The protest followed clashes between inhabitants of the A-Teen Valley and Israeli land surveyors. The area is adjacent to the Green Line, the border with Israel. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

23. On 14 February, it was reported that the Israeli human rights group Hamoked had revealed that Israel had refused to register as permanent residents teenagers whose West Bank parents had spent years living abroad. Hamoked stated that the Government of Israel had violated a military law, which stipulated that the Government must register as permanent residents all West Bank Palestinians who had reached the age of 16, provided that one of their parents enjoyed that status. In another development, the monthly publication by the Gaza-based Palestinian Authority Ministry of the Interior noted that Israel was basing itself on a 1952 law that authorized it to withdraw the rights of permanent residency when it deemed necessary in order to reduce the number of Jerusalem Arabs once negotiations on the final status began. The monthly report also noted that the Government of Israel was taking new measures against Palestinians with Jordanian passports married to women from Jerusalem. The Ministry had been annulling visas refusing to extend the period of residency and had forced men to hand in the identity cards of their spouses. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

24. On 16 February, it was reported that the Ministry of Justice had completed the formulation of a bill that would prevent thousands of Palestinians who were wounded by IDF troops during the intifadah from receiving compensation, except in "special humanitarian cases". In addition, the proposed legislation, known as the Intifadah Injuries Law, would cancel compensation claims already filed in Israeli courts and would relieve the General Security Services (GSS) of responsibility for paying damages to persons claiming to have suffered physical or mental injuries during interrogation. Hundreds of Palestinians are said to have claims pending in Israeli courts of up to one billion new Israeli shekels (NIS). (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 16 February)

25. On 17 February, Israel and the Palestinian Authority resumed joint military patrols in Tulkarm, the seventh and last city in which patrols had been renewed since their suspension following the September clashes in the territories. (Jerusalem Post, 18 February)

26. On 19 February, the Palestinian Authority Minister without portfolio, Faisal Husseini, stated that the construction of a settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim south of Jerusalem was tantamount to a declaration of war. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 February)

27. On 20 February, the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights issued a two-part annual report on human rights violations by Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 1996. The part on Israel stressed that, from a legal

point of view, the Israeli occupation continued, as did control of the lives of the Palestinians through systematic violations of their economic and political rights. It stated that there had been an upsurge in settler violence and land confiscation since the election in May of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The report stated that the second half of the year had seen an increase in the frequency of warnings that "illegal" Palestinian housing in area C would be demolished. The report observed that the construction of "illegal" housing was a genuine necessity since the Israeli Construction and Planning Committee had refused to grant building permits to Palestinians for years. The report indicated that some 1,200 demolition orders were pending in Israeli courts. Thousands of Palestinians, 300 of whom were administrative detainees, continued to be held in Israeli prisons. Sixty-three Palestinians, 11 of whom were children, had been killed by IDF troops during the September clashes. More than 2,000 were injured, mostly in the upper parts of the body. The report provided claims that this was aimed at preventing life-threatening danger to the soldiers. The report gave a detailed account of incidents in which Palestinians were killed by IDF soldiers and settlers. It charged that the one penny fine meted out to four soldiers who were convicted of causing death by negligence did not serve as a deterrent but rather the contrary. Cases of humiliation of Palestinians at IDF roadblocks were also documented. The picture emerging from the report was that Palestinians continued to live in constant fear for their lives, personal safety, future, property and honour. Their hopes that the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and the extension of self-rule would enable them to enjoy their human rights had been dashed. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 February)

28. On 20 February, Brig.-Gen. Ya'acov Or was officially appointed as Coordinator of the Government's Activities in the Territories. He served, among other things, as OC IDF troops in the Gaza Strip at the beginning of the intifadah and OC IDF troops in the West Bank and had replaced Maj.-Gen. Oren Shahor. (Ha'aretz, 21 February)

29. On 21 February, it was reported that Israel had lodged a protest with the Palestinian Authority after the women prisoners released a week earlier were given positions within the Palestinian security apparatus. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 February)

30. On 23 February, it was reported that Palestinian officials continued to warn of a deterioration in relations with Israel should the Government of Israel continue to adhere to its settlement policy in Jerusalem and the West Bank. A statement by the Palestinian Authority Cabinet warned that Israel would bear full responsibility for the consequences of construction in East Jerusalem. In an interview with the Voice of Palestine, the Secretary-General of the Palestinian Cabinet, Ahmed Abed Al Rahaman, stated that Israel was mistaken if it thought that Palestinians would sit on the fence while their homeland were being carved into cantons. He stated that the Israelis were not interested in building relations of trust, which had been proven by their policy concerning the West Bank and Jerusalem. He added that Israelis wanted Palestinians to work as labourers in their factories, provide a market for their produce and live in cantons. (Ha'aretz, 23 February)

31. On 26 February, member States of LAS called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council in order to reverse Israel's decision to construct a new Jewish settlement in the Har Homa area of East Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 28 February)

32. On 26 February, an Israeli ministerial committee decided to start work on the Har Homa settlement, on what is known to Palestinians as Jabal Abu Ghneim. Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu explained that the first stage of the settlement plan would include the construction of 3,000 housing units for Palestinians living in Jerusalem, to be followed by 6,000 additional units whose construction would be finalized at the end of a lengthy, bureaucratic procedure. The Jerusalem Times pointed out that the committee's decision did not mention the immediate start of work on housing units for Arabs in the city but rather preparatory work that would pave the way for an infrastructure for the building of future housing units. The newspaper added that when Mr. Netanyahu spoke about the 3,000 housing units for Arabs in Jerusalem, he was speaking in fact of the potential capacity of areas to absorb the given number of houses. Palestinians would need to apply for construction permits in the areas covered by the plan, a total of 10 neighbourhoods, and wait for the appropriate permits to be issued. In a related development, the Israeli Foreign Ministry claimed that 75 per cent of the land where the new settlement was to be built belonged to Jews while only 25 per cent belonged to Arabs. Of the 75 per cent, 136 dunums of land apparently used to belong to an Arab Palestinian currently living in the United States of America who had sold it to Jewish investors. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 February)

33. On 2 March, it was reported that OC Central Command, Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan, had urged settlers in the West Bank to carry their weapons wherever they go for fear of attacks in the region. However, he asked the settlers to avoid friction with Palestinians. (Ha'aretz, 2 March)

34. On 3 March, a general strike was observed throughout the territories in protest against the decision of the Government of Israel to build the Har Homa Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 4 March)

35. On 4 March, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered the closure of four Palestinian offices in Jerusalem. Mr. Netanyahu's decision was reportedly based on a recommendation by the chief of the anti-terrorism forces, Maj.-Gen. Meir Dagan. The four offices were those of the Welfare and Development Committee, the National Islamic Committee Confronting Settlements, the Institute for the Wounded, and the Office for National Institutions. Palestinian officials charged that the decision to close the offices was designed to raise tensions and sabotage the peace process. Faisal Husseini, the senior Palestinian official in Jerusalem, described the closure order as a deliberate provocation. In another development, Mr. Netanyahu stated that his Government had not authorized the building of any new settlements in the territories because there was still work to be done in existing settlements. He pointed out, however, that his Government had placed settlements back on the list of national priorities and was not curbing the growth of either Jewish or Arab communities in Judea, Samaria (West Bank) and Gaza. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 5 and 6 March)

36. On 6 March, 42 families from the Jahalin Bedouin tribe petitioned the High Court of Justice concerning their eviction from the Maaleh Adumim area and transfer to a site lacking any amenities 500 metres away from the Jerusalem area garbage dump. The petitioners claimed that the new site exposed them to life-threatening danger owing to health hazards. They also claimed that the numerous stray dogs that roamed the area threatened their livestock. The families stated that the UNRWA tents in which they had been living had been blown down by storms and asked the Court to order the Government to build a neighbourhood for them in place of what had been described as "the latest Palestinian refugee camp". They also requested that they be given caravans with running water, heating, toilets and electricity pending the construction of the neighbourhood. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 7 March)

37. On 6 March, Palestinian and Israeli sources confirmed that the second stage of the Israeli army redeployment from areas A and B of the West Bank would cover 8 to 10 per cent of the total area. The sources also confirmed that the area would be vacated during the ensuing days. The Government of Israel has also decided to stop, perhaps temporarily, the demolition of Arab houses in area C where it was in full control of daily life and security. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 March)

38. On 7 March, it was reported that the head of the Mapping Department at Orient House, Khalil Toufakji, had noted that the Israeli decision regarding new housing for Palestinian Jerusalemites did not speak of direct or immediate construction of housing for Arabs. Mr. Toufakji added that even if construction work on the Arab side were to start the next day, the housing would not be the same as that built for Jews. He stated that in Israel, Israelis were allowed to build high-rise buildings with as many as 10 floors, while on the Arab side of the city the maximum number of floors was 4, which meant that no real housing compounds could be built. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 March)

39. On 8 March, Arab countries pressed for an emergency meeting of the General Assembly a day after the United States of America had vetoed a Security Council resolution calling for Israel to abandon plans for a new Jewish neighbourhood of Har Homa in East Jerusalem. The vote in the Council had been 14 in favour, with only the United States of America voting against the resolution. The defeated resolution would have expressed deep concern over the decision of Israel to initiate new settlement activities in the Jabal Abu Ghneim area in East Jerusalem. It would also have called upon the Israeli authorities to refrain from all actions or measures, including settlement activities, which altered the facts on the ground, pre-empting the final status negotiations, and had negative implications for the Middle East peace process. (Jerusalem Post, 9 March)

40. On 9 March, King Hussein of Jordan addressed a letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in which he expressed fears that Mr. Netanyahu was not acting as a peace partner and that his policies, especially the building of the new Jewish settlement of Har Homa in East Jerusalem, would make bloodshed virtually impossible to avoid. In the three-page letter, King Hussein wrote:

> "My distress is genuine and deep over the accumulating tragic actions which you have initiated as the Head of the Government of Israel, making peace - the worthiest objective of my life - appear more and more like a

distant elusive mirage. I could remain aloof if the very lives of all Arabs and Israelis and their future were not fast sliding towards an abyss of bloodshed and disaster, brought about by fear and despair ... Mr. Prime Minister, if it is your intention to manoeuvre our Palestinian brethren into inevitable violent resistance, then order your bulldozers into the proposed settlement site without doing much of that needed in recognition of Palestinian and Arab sensitivity. Then order the young Israeli members of your powerful armed forces surrounding Palestinian towns to commit wanton murder and mayhem, possibly resulting in creating yet a fresh exodus of hapless Palestinians from the homeland of their ancestors and bury the peace process for all time". (Jerusalem Post, 12 March)

41. On 9 March, in a meeting with Foreign Minister David Levi in Jerusalem that ended in an atmosphere of crisis, Palestinian representatives rejected a planned 9 per cent Israeli pull-back in the West Bank. Apart from rejecting the extent of the redeployment, the Palestinians argued that they should have been consulted before the decision was made. Other disagreements during the meeting concerned the planned Har Homa settlement and the closure of four Palestinian offices in East Jerusalem. Responding to a request by the Secretary-General of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, that Israel reconsider the construction of the Har Homa settlement, Mr. Levi stated that Israel's position remained unchanged and that there was nothing in the Oslo accords that forbade Israeli construction anywhere during the interim period, let alone in Jerusalem. Replying to Mr. Abbas's protest, Mr. Levi stated that Palestinians should lower their expectations. (Jerusalem Post, 10 March)

42. On 10 March, the Government of Israel announced its decision to allow Jews to use the Al Aqsa Mosque as a prayer site. The announcement indicated that Jews had never been prohibited from prayers on the site. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

43. On 13 March, by an overwhelming majority of 130 votes to 2, the General Assembly passed a resolution calling upon Israel to reverse its decision to build a Jewish settlement at Har Homa. The United States, which was criticized for blocking a similar resolution in the Security Council on 7 March, joined Israel in voting against the resolution which called upon Israel to refrain from all actions or measures, including settlement activities, which altered the final status negotiations and had negative implications for the Middle East peace process. The resolution referred to the Har Homa project as "new settlement activities in the Jabal Abu Ghneim area in East Jerusalem", calling such activities illegal. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 14 March)

44. On 13 March, Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat opened a meeting of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Bethlehem with an attack against what he described as a monster known as settlements which was eating up Palestinian land and destroying the peace process. Mr. Arafat stated that the Har Homa construction project and the further redeployment of Israeli troops were only 2 of more than 70 issues that remained to be resolved with Israel. He gave Mr. Netanyahu no credit for things he had done, such as releasing all the women prisoners, which, he stated, occurred only after 60 fights among them. Finally, he stated that Israel was not paying its debts to the Palestinian Authority. (Jerusalem Post, 14 March)

45. On 14 March, it was reported that the Government of Israel had decided to refrain from closing four Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem after security agents and legal advisors convinced the Minister of Internal Security, Avigdor Kahalani, that the institutions did not represent Palestinian Authority interests. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

46. On 14 March, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was reported to have declared at a press conference that construction would soon begin on Jabal Abu Ghneim. In a report on Mr. Netanyahu's housing plan for Arabs, The Jerusalem Times pointed out that housing for Jews was based on well organized government-funded plans while construction for Arabs depended on individual initiative and private capital. The weekly newspaper also stated that a municipal report dated 1994 noted that space had been allotted in East Jerusalem for 15,210 housing units. The Prime Minister's plan provided for only 3,000 housing units for the Palestinians. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

47. On 19 March, bulldozers and surveyors guarded by Israeli troops arrived to start work on Jabal Abu Ghneim, in spite of international condemnation. Ground levelling began the following day. The Israeli military presence was heavy on the site but no major showdown was reported during the first days of work. All Palestinian towns and cities in the West Bank were declared closed military zones for Israelis. Jews were ordered to leave Joseph's Tomb in Nablus and Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem. Troops were reinforced in the West Bank in anticipation of clashes with the Palestinians. Contacts between Palestinian and Israeli officials ceased after a failure to coordinate a meeting between President Arafat and Prime Minister Netanyahu. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 March)

48. On 21 March, for the second time in two weeks, the United States cast its veto in the Security Council in order to block a resolution that would have called on Israel to halt construction at Har Homa in Jerusalem. The United States cautioned, however, that its veto should not be construed as support for the project. The Council also issued a statement expressing its "revulsion" at the suicide bombing in a Tel Aviv café. The Secretary-General of the United Nations condemned the bombing and appealed to the parties concerned not to allow odious acts of this nature to derail the peace process. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 23 March)

49. On 21 March, it was reported that the General Committee for Land Defence had condemned the decision of Israel to confiscate hundreds of dunums of land belonging to the town of Anata in order to expand the Talmon settlement. Anata lies just outside of Jerusalem, on the north-east side of the city. Thousands of dunums of land had already been seized in February 1997 from Anata for the benefit of the Maaleh Adumim settlement. Additional land was seized subsequently for the paving of a new settler road. Of the original 35,000 dunums of land that belonged to Anata, only 1,300 dunums remained. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 March)

50. On 23 March, Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat warned in Islamabad that the peace process was on the verge of collapse and issued a plea to Islamic leaders to rescue Jerusalem from Israel. In a 10-minute speech, Mr. Arafat accused Israel of reneging on the terms of the peace process and warned that time was running out. He stated that "Very serious events and

developments concerning the peace process have led us almost to a dead end that threatens the whole peace process and could undermine the achievements and hopes raised by the process". (Jerusalem Post, 24 March)

51. On 27 March, the Palestinian Legislative Council ended its meeting with a call to suspend talks with Israel until all settlement expansion activities were halted. It also issued ambiguous calls for violent resistance to Israel's policies. (Jerusalem Post, 28 March)

52. On 28 March, it was reported that considerable unrest prevailed in the West Bank following the decision of Israel to build the new settlement of Har Homa on Jabal Abu Ghneim in East Jerusalem. Palestinians were also angered by the decision of Israel to restrict the redeployment of its troops in the West Bank to at least 2 per cent of area C. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

53. On 30 March, the Voice of Palestine reported that 460 Palestinians had been injured during 10 days of clashes with IDF troops in the territories. The casualties suffered mainly from tear gas inhalation and injuries caused by rubber bullets. (Ha'aretz, 31 March)

54. On 4 April, it was reported that numerous Christian families from the Bethlehem area had spent Easter Sunday on Jabal Abu Ghneim visiting the encampment set up by local Palestinians to protest against the decision of Israel to turn the hill into a new settlement. (The Jerusalem Times, 4 April)

55. On 3 April, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated that construction at the Har Homa settlement in Jerusalem would proceed as planned, as would work in other settlements. Mr. Netanyahu, who accused Yasser Arafat of giving a green light to "terrorism", warned that should acts of "terrorism" not be halted, Israel might consider what he described as other, non-diplomatic alternatives. In a comment on Mr. Netanyahu's remarks, Mr. Arafat told Reuters in Gaza that he opposed terrorism. The problem, he indicated, was how to push forward the peace process, especially how to stop the Israeli breaching of the agreement, including the confiscation of Palestinian land, the building on Abu Ghneim hill (Har Homa), the Judaization of Jerusalem and the closure. During a meeting with President Bill Clinton on 7 April, Prime Minister Netanyahu reaffirmed that building in settlements, including Har Homa, would continue. In another statement made before a Christian-Jewish group, Mr. Netanyahu declared that Israel would not make certain gestures to the Palestinians, such as opening a safe passage between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank or air and sea ports, which he claimed would simply unleash "terrorism". (Ha'aretz, 4 April; Jerusalem Post, 4, 8 April)

56. On 4 April, it was reported that according to Israeli archaeologists, a street which had been discovered at a depth of six metres during the laying down of a sewage network in the Old City of Jerusalem, was one of the streets that led into the Temple area during Roman times. The street was located at a distance of 10 metres from a historic tunnel, known as the Hashmonean Tunnel, whose opening had triggered off the dramatic clashes of September 1996. The head of the Antiquities Department, General Amir Drori, had asked the Government of Israel for permission to excavate the area and to declare the excavations as

one of the projects marking the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel. (The Jerusalem Times, 4 April)

57. On 5 April, Palestinian and Jordanian businessmen launched a campaign to establish a holding company with the aim of buying up and developing Arab property in Jerusalem. The businessmen also stated that their intention was to prevent Arab property from falling into Israeli hands. (The Jerusalem Times, 4 April)

58. On 7 April, the Islamic Jihad announced that it would carry out more suicide attacks against Jewish settlers in response to the construction of the Har Homa settlement in south-eastern Jerusalem. In a leaflet signed "Kassam", the Islamic Jihad's military wing, it warned that Zionist settlers, no matter where in Palestinian land they found themselves, would not be safe from the Islamic Jihad's weapons and human bombs. (Jerusalem Post, 8 April)

59. On 11 April, it was reported that after his meeting with the President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, reiterated his Government's decision to continue settlement activity. Mr. Netanyahu stated that construction work would continue in Har Homa, in Jerusalem and in the West Bank. Palestinians had expressed disappointment at the failure of the United States Adminstration to bring about a change in the Israeli settlement policy. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

60. On 11 April, it was reported that scores of Israeli tanks had been stationed at the entrances to the major West Bank cities. Senior Israeli military officers insisted that the tanks were positioned for deterrence purposes outside the area under the control of the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was reported to have instructed his Chief of General Staff, Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak, to pull out old contingency plans according to which the Israeli army was prepared to storm areas when necessary. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

61. On 13 April, the security forces continued to arrest numerous Palestinians on suspicion of involvement in Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. The arrests were made in the Tsurif village area, Hebron and other parts of the West Bank under Israeli security control. A senior security source stated that 75 people had been arrested at that stage. According to the same source, a plan to carry out an attack against a settlement had been discovered during the interrogation of suspects. (Ha'aretz, 14 April)

62. On 15 April, Israel reimposed a full closure on the West Bank only a few days after it had begun introducing measures to ease its effects. A spokesman for the Israeli Army stated that the 1,000 Palestinian labourers who worked in Israeli settlements in the West Bank would also not be given access to their place of work. The spokesman explained that the measures were taken by the Minister of Defence, Yitzhak Mordechai, to avert potential armed attacks against Israelis. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

63. On 21 April, it was reported that, as part of a renewed campaign to strangle the military wing of Hamas, the Civil Administration had resumed intensive efforts to crack down on Hamas-supported mosques, charity committees,

schools and health institutions. Israel reportedly considered the Hamas social welfare structure as the foundation of the Hamas military wing, accusing it of not only channelling funds to "terrorists" but also of helping to recruit supporters. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 April)

64. On 23 April, the OC Southern Command, General Shlomo Yana'i, signed an order banning the transfer of rocks to the Gaza Strip for the construction of a sea port. The order was reportedly issued as part of Israeli attempts to disrupt Palestinian efforts to expand by several hundred metres the quay of the Gaza port and to set up an anchorage point there. (Ha'aretz, 24 April)

65. On 25 April, the General Assembly, meeting in an emergency special session passed a resolution condemning Israel for the Har Homa project and demanding that it be halted immediately. The Assembly also recommended that the permanent status agreement on Jerusalem include internationally guaranteed provisions to ensure the freedom of religion and of conscience of its inhabitants, and unhindered access to the Holy places by the faithful of all religions. Foreign Minister David Levy of Israel stated in response to the General Assembly decision that Israel utterly rejected the resolution which he described as one-sided, lacking any procedural or practical justification and even contrary to the principles of the peace process. (Ha'aretz, 27 April)

66. On 25 April, it was reported that Israeli military sources had announced the launching of a campaign against Hamas institutions in the West Bank. The sources indicated that the army was targeting some 50 institutions, including mosques and charitable societies. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

67. On 29 April, the Israeli Minister of Defence, Yitzhak Mordechai, announced the decision of Israel to lift the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as of 30 April 1997. (The Jerusalem Times, 2 May)

2. Incidents resulting from the occupation

68. The following abbreviations of the names of newspapers are used in the tables below: H: Ha'aretz; JP: Jerusalem Post; JT: The Jerusalem Times.

(a) Palestinians killed by troops or Israeli civilians

Date	Name and age	Place of residence	Remarks and source
15 January	Name not reported, 30	Sur Baher village Jerusalem	Shot dead after throwing stones at policemen during a chase in Sur Baher village. (H, JP, 16 January)
6 February	Yasser (Abdel) Hamshari or Alrani, 21	Tulkarm (or Ramallah)	Died in Ramallah hospital of wounds sustained during gun battles between Palestinian Police and IDF soldiers after the opening of the Hashmonean Tunnel in September 1996. (H, JP, 9 February; JT, 14 February)
25 February	Abdul Aziz Ibn Halawi, 55	Hizmeh village	Shot by soldiers of the Duvdevan undercover unit during clashes in Hizmeh village. (H, 26 February; JP, 27 February)
29 March	Abdullah or Abdallah Halil Salah, 20 or 21, or Sajardiyeh	Beit Sahur village (Bir Zeit area)	Student at Bir Zeit University. Shot by IDF troops during riots near Ramallah. Was brought to hospital with a gaping chest wound, reportedly caused by a live bullet. (H, JP, 30 March; also referred to in JT, 4 April)
1 April	Hitam Manssour, 20	Kalil village (Nablus area)	Plainclothes Palestinian policeman. Injured in the eye by live bullets during violent clashes between IDF troops and Palestinian residents near an IDF roadblock west of Nablus. (H, JP, 2 April; also referred to in JT, 4 April)
1 April	Kamel el Zaru, 18	Hebron	Shot by IDF soldiers in the head, chest and stomach after he had ignored an order to stop. According to the police and IDF, he was involved in a break-in attempt in the industrial zone of the Kiryat Arba settlement. (H, JP, 2 April)
7 April	Assem Rashad Kamel Arafh (age not reported)	Hebron	Killed by a settler. (JT, 11 April)

Date	Name and age	Place of residence	Remarks and source
8 April	Nader Sa'id, 24	Hebron	Struck in the eye by a rubber bullet fired by a soldier at close range after rioters threw stones and firebombs at IDF troops in Hebron. According to Palestinian sources, he was a victim of random shooting by a settler. (H, JP, 9 April; JP, 10 April; also referred to in JT, 4 April)
8 April	Yakoub Fahami Julani, 15	Hebron	Student, injured in the head by rubber bullets during violent clashes between IDF troops and Palestinian residents in Hebron. (H, JP, 9 April; also referred to in JT, 25 April)
8 April	Issam Arafi, 24 or 30	Hebron	Shot in the chest by one or two settlers who claimed that he had thrown acid or tear gas at them. Palestinians claimed that the settlers opened fire without provocation. (H, JP, 9 April)
27 or 28 April	Issam Akabneh, 18, or Abu Amiriyeh	Haras village (Hebron area)	High school student. Shot in the head by IDF gunfire during rioting in Haras village near Hebron. (H, JP, 29 April; also referred to in JT, 2 May)
30 April	Name not reported, 30	Not reported	Shot by border policemen who opened fire at the car he was travelling in after its driver tried to run them down at a Jerusalem roadblock. Died in hospital. (H, JP, 1 May; also referred to in JT, 2 May)

(b) Other Palestinians killed as a result of the occupation

Date	Name and age	Place of residence	Remarks and source
20 January	Lafi Rafe's Daraghmeh, 14	Tubas village (Jenin area)	Killed when he stepped on a mine while grazing his sheep; the mine was left by IDF in a practice area near his village. (JT, 24 January; H, 27 January)
21 March	Moussa Ranimat, 28 (or Abdul Khader)	Tsurif village (Hebron area)	Hamas suicide bomber. Blew himself up in a crowded café in Tel Aviv. (JT, 21 March; H, JP, 23 March)
23 March	Mouhammed Ahmed el Arar, 60	Tsurif village	According to Palestinian sources, died of a heart attack after the vehicle rushing him to hospital was delayed for half an hour at an IDF roadblock outside Tsurif village. The village had been placed under curfew on 21 March after a suicide bomb attack in Tel Aviv carried out by one of its residents. (H, 24 March)
1 April	Ranouar Ahmed el Shabrawi (age not reported)	Jabalia refugee camp (Gaza Strip)	Islamic Jihad suicide bomber. Blew himself up near the Netzarim settlement minutes before a school bus carrying Jewish children was due to pass by. (H, JP, 2 and 4 April; JP, 4 April)
1 April	Ramadan el Mad'un (age not reported)	Jabalia refugee camp (Gaza Strip)	Islamic Jihad suicide bomber. Blew himself up near the Kfar Darom settlement, minutes before a school bus carrying Jewish children was due to pass by. (H, JP, 2 and 4 April; JP, 4 April)

(c) Other incidents

69. On 1 January, seven Palestinians were wounded, one or two of them seriously, when a 19-year-old Israeli soldier opened fire at Arab civilians in the casbah in Hebron. The soldier fired some 15 to 20 bullets before being wrestled to the ground and subdued by an Israeli officer and two soldiers. The casualties were rushed to the city's Aliya Hospital where crowds of furious Palestinians began throwing stones and burning tyres to protest against the shooting. The victims at the hospital tended to view the incident as a conspiracy between the attacker and other soldiers. Four of those wounded

stated that they were hit by several soldiers while the relatives of the man who sustained the most serious wounds stated that he had been shot at by soldiers stationed on a roof. According to other eyewitnesses, soldiers had fired into the air when the attack had begun. Large numbers of IDF troops were dispatched to Hebron immediately after the shooting and armoured personnel carriers were placed at strategic points around the city. During his interrogation, the gunman expressed no regrets for the shooting, stating that he wanted to murder many Arabs and damage the peace process. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 2 January)

70. On 2 January, the Samaria and Judea (West Bank) police arrested an 18-year-old Palestinian on suspicion of throwing seven firebombs at Jewish and IDF targets in Hebron. Two reserve soldiers were slightly wounded in one of the attacks. The suspect was the second man to be arrested in connection with a wave of firebombing incidents in Hebron over the previous two weeks. (Jerusalem Post, 3 January)

71. On 9 January, 13 people were injured in an apparent "terrorist" attack when two small improvised bombs exploded in garbage cans in the old Tel Aviv Central Bus Station. One Arab worker was held for questioning but it was unclear whether he was connected with the incident. The police and security forces did not entirely rule out criminal motives for the explosions. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 10 January)

72. On 10 January, Islamic Jihad and Hamas leaders vowed to carry out new suicide bombings and military attacks against Israel. The leaders issued their statement while addressing a rally at the Yarmouk refugee camp near Damascus to commemorate the first anniversary of the killing of Yihye Ayyash, the Hamas bomb maker. Another anniversary demonstration was held at Nablus. Estimates of the number of persons in the crowd were high, indicating that not only Hamas supporters took part. According to the Associated Press, some 15,000 persons participated in the demonstration at a Nablus sports stadium, with a huge picture of Ayyash as a backdrop. On 11 January, students at Bir Zeit University burned a replica of a No. 18 Egged company bus to mark the anniversary of the killing. Ayyash, known as the Engineer, was killed in the Gaza Strip by an explosive planted in a cellular phone. Hamas blamed Israel for his killing. Two No. 18 buses were blown up in Jerusalem as part of Hamas's campaign of retribution for his death. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 12 January)

73. On 15 January, a 30-year-old Palestinian man was shot dead by police during a chase (see para. 68 above, table (a)). The incident occurred when policemen on a routine patrol in the Arnon Hanatziv settlement ordered a suspicious car to stop. Its two male passengers ignored the order and headed for Sur Baher where they got out of the car. One of the men began throwing stones at the police who responded by shooting him. The other man managed to escape. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 16 January)

74. On 17 January, scuffles between Palestinian protesters and Israeli soldiers were reported when Israeli forces intervened to evacuate the Jahalin Bedouin near Jerusalem. A 20-year-old Palestinian, Sulaiman Rahil, was seriously injured and taken to hospital. Three local residents were arrested. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 January)

75. On 18 January, the windows of six Egged company buses were smashed during several stone-throwing incidents involving Arab youths in the Old City of Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 19 January)

76. On 19 January, a 14-year-old Palestinian girl tried to stab a policeman in the back on the Temple Mount. She tried to flee after missing him but the policeman ran after her and caught her. He sustained a slight stab wound in the hand when he disarmed her. (Jerusalem Post, 20 January)

77. On 22 January, IDF troops caught an Arab who attempted to enter Israel clandestinely by hiding in the baggage compartment of a bus transporting Palestinian policemen from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip. The infiltrator and the bus driver were handed over to the Israeli police for interrogation. (Jerusalem Post, 23 January)

78. On 24 January, it was reported that a 14-year-old Palestinian boy (see para. 68 above, table (b)) was killed when he stepped on an Israeli mine while grazing his sheep in Tubas village. A statement issued by the Al-Haq human rights organization stated that it had repeatedly demanded that Israel clear the debris and weapons left behind after army manoeuvres. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

79. On 27 January, it was reported that a 14-year-old Palestinian boy had been killed (see table (b) above) by an explosion of ammunition left by IDF troops in a firing range in the West Bank. The boy, from Tubas village in the Jenin area, was killed while herding his goats in Wadi Al-Malah. According to the residents, the explosion occurred in an unfenced area belonging to the boy's family. The head of the Tubas Local Council, Diab Abu Hazran, charged that thousands of dunums of land belonging to Tubas and to nearby villages had been declared a closed military zone. Mr. Hazran complained that over the previous years, IDF had been carrying out military exercises on cultivated Palestinian land and in the vicinity of inhabited areas. He charged further that the army did not carry out its exercises on one fixed site, which would allow residents to stay away, and did not clear away the ammunition after exercising. According to a statement released by the Physicians for Human Rights Association, the Palestinian boy was the 24th victim to be killed over the previous eight years as a result of the explosion of ammunition left by IDF in practice areas in the West Bank. The statement cited a report by the B'tselem human rights organization, according to which 88 Palestinians had been injured in 60 separate incidents by explosions of abandoned ammunition since 1988, 64 of whom were children 16 years of age or less. (Ha'aretz, 27 January)

80. On 6 February, a border policeman shot and slightly injured an Arab youth in Jerusalem's Old City. The incident occurred when a border policeman arrested an Arab youth for throwing stones at an Egged company bus near the Damascus Gate. The youth responded by attacking the policeman who fired and injured him in the leg. In another development, a Palestinian university student died (see table (a) above) of wounds he had sustained during gun battles between the Palestinian police and IDF soldiers in September 1996. His death raised to 61 the number of Palestinians killed in the confrontations that had erupted after Israel opened an exit to the Western Wall Tunnel. Palestinians killed 15

Israelis during the clashes. (Ha'aretz, 9 February; Jerusalem Post, 7 and 9 February)

81. On 6 February, a Palestinian youth died of wounds sustained during clashes between the Palestinians and Israelis sparked by the opening of a tunnel parallel to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in September 1996 (see para. 68 above, table (a)). The youth died in an intensive care unit where he had been since the previous September. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

82. On 7 February, an incident involving the throwing of stones at an IDF roadblock took place near the Gilo settlement. Two suspects were arrested in connection with the incident, which occurred when thousands of Palestinians from the West Bank were being prevented from entering Jerusalem to take part in the prayers of the last Friday of Ramadan on the grounds that they did not have the necessary permits. (Ha'aretz, 9 February)

83. On 16 February, an Israeli Arab suffered serious head injuries when his car, which had yellow license plates, was stoned on the Halhoul bypass road. (Jerusalem Post, 17 February)

84. On 25 February, soldiers from the Duvdevan undercover unit killed one Palestinian (see para. 68 above, table (a)) and injured three others in Hizmeh village north of Jerusalem. The incident occurred at a time when tension in the territories was running high over Israel's plan to build a Jewish settlement in Har Homa, in East Jerusalem. According to initial Israeli reports, three Duvdevan soldiers disguised as Arabs arrived in Hizme, located about a kilometre north of the Pisgat Ze'ev settlement, as part of a training exercise. The soldiers, two trainees and an instructor, were supposed to scout the village from the roof of a building, when the building owner noticed their presence. He thought that they were settlers and began shouting, attracting a crowd that started to throw stones and other objects at the soldiers who responded with gunfire, causing the death of a 55-year-old Palestinian, Ibn Halawi. The villagers, however, had another version of the incident, claiming that Halawi was killed defending his son-in-law. They stated that he was beaten, pinned to the ground and shot. OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan voiced his support for the elite Duvdevan unit whose soldiers were involved in the incident. He defended the soldiers, stating that they were attacked in a manner that posed danger to their lives and had no choice but to open fire. An Israeli investigation of the incident was reportedly under way. (Ha'aretz, 26 February; Jerusalem Post, 27 February)

85. On 26 February, hundreds of Palestinians attended the funeral of a Palestinian man who was killed on 25 February during an undercover operation by Israeli soldiers disguised as Arabs in Hizmeh village. During the funeral, local youths clashed with security forces and threw stones at them. Security forces fired tear gas in response. (Jerusalem Post, 27 February)

86. On 6 March, a 51-year-old Jewish resident of Jerusalem was moderately wounded when he was stabbed by a Palestinian youth while sitting on a park bench behind the King David Hotel. Police made no arrests. They were unable to determine whether the motive was nationalistic or criminal. In another incident, an Israeli taxi driver was stabbed by two Arab passengers that he had

picked up near Hebron. Two incidents involving shooting at IDF patrols occurred in the Jenin area for the fourth time during the week; no harm or injuries were reported. A border policeman was slightly injured by a stone thrown at him in the Hebron area. Other incidents involving the throwing of stones at five IDF patrols took place on the Ramallah bypass road. In the Gaza Strip, a Palestinian officer punched an Israeli officer during a joint Israeli-Palestinian patrol. The incident occurred when the patrol detected a stone-throwing youth near the Kfar Darom settlement. The youth was caught after being chased by Palestinian and Israeli policemen. When the Israeli officer wanted to transfer the youth for interrogation in Israel, however, the Palestinian officer refused to allow it. The ensuing argument between the two soon degenerated into a violent confrontation. (Ha'aretz, 7 and 11 March; Jerusalem Post, 7 March)

87. On 6 March, several villagers from Kufr Qaddoum were wounded in confrontations with settlers from Qdumim. During the clashes, the settlers used firearms and rubber bullets. The villagers struck back with stones. One settler was wounded. Several Palestinians were arrested by IDF which took control of the area. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

88. On 10 March, 20 Palestinians were wounded and hospitalized when clashes occurred between residents and IDF soldiers protecting bulldozers that were levelling land in Hebron. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

89. On 11 March, an IDF soldier was stabbed 20 times in the head, stomach and neck by two masked "terrorists" while guarding the entrance to the Teneh Omarim settlement on southern Mount Hebron. The attackers fled with the soldier's weapon. IDF troops arrested four suspects in the nearby Dahariya village, but all were released after questioning. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 12 March)

90. On 13 March, an Israeli woman was slightly wounded during a stone-throwing incident near the Maaleh Levonah settlement on the outskirts of Ramallah. An Israeli man was injured during a stone-throwing incident near the Mitzpeh Yericho settlement. (Ha'aretz, 14 March)

91. On 15 March, masked Palestinians burned an American flag during demonstrations in Nablus against plans of the Government of Israel to construct a Jewish settlement at Har Homa. An alliance of eight Muslim groups, including the Islamic Jihad and Hamas, called on Palestinians to escalate attacks against Israel in order to block the construction. (Jerusalem Post, 16 March)

92. On 17 March, a Palestinian drove a taxi through a stop sign at the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip and slammed into an IDF jeep, injuring four soldiers. The army undertook an investigation to determine whether the crash was a simple traffic accident or a deliberate attack. In another incident, a border policeman was slightly injured when Palestinians threw stones at soldiers and border policemen on patrol in Beit Ummar, near Hebron. (Jerusalem Post, 18 March)

93. On 20 March, violent clashes broke out between IDF soldiers and hundreds of Palestinians who were protesting against the Har Homa housing project. The clashes occurred at Rachel's Tomb when Palestinians started throwing stones and incendiary bottles at IDF soldiers who responded with water cannons, tear gas

and rubber bullets. According to Palestinian sources, 20 demonstrators were injured by tear gas inhalation and 2 by rubber bullets. In the Beit Ummar village south of Bethlehem, dozens of residents threw stones at soldiers and placed rocks at the entrance to the village. One border policeman was injured by a stone. Stones were also thrown at tourist buses in Bethlehem, without causing any injuries. Two border policemen were injured in another stone-throwing incident in Hebron. In another development, six Hai Vekayam activists were arrested and taken for questioning after they had tried to force their way onto the Temple Mount to pray there. One of those arrested, the son of the Hai Vekayam founder, stated that the group had recently decided to step up their efforts to pray on the Temple Mount. (Jerusalem Post, 21 March)

94. On 21 March, a suicide bomber detonated a three-kilogram TNT bomb packed with nails and pieces of metal in a crowded café in Tel Aviv, killing himself (see para. 68 above, table (b)), 3 Israeli women and injuring up to 61 persons. In a telephone call to Israeli television channel 1, Hamas claimed responsibility for the blast. GSS chief Ami Ayalon met with Palestinian Authority security heads and demanded that they immediately rearrest some 150 security prisoners who had been released by the Palestinian Authority during the previous two weeks. Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani visited the scene of the explosion and attacked Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat for giving a green light to "terror" organizations and failing to prevent attacks. Mr. Kahalani reaffirmed, however, that the Har Homa building project would continue. "We will not stop building in Jerusalem nor anywhere else and will certainly not surrender to terrorists and their threats. It is known that the Palestinians want to drive us into the sea and out of the country. We will not be driven into the sea", he stated. Palestinian officials condemned the attack but blamed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for creating the conditions conducive to it. They also dismissed charges that Mr. Arafat had given Hamas a green light to act. Numerous clashes between Palestinian residents and IDF troops were reported throughout the territories. Some 200 Palestinians were slightly injured by tear gas inhalation and rubber bullets during clashes with IDF troops in Hebron. The Alya Hospital in Hebron reported treating 18 Palestinians who had been injured by IDF bullets, 3 of whom were listed as being in moderate to serious condition. Eight incendiary bottles were thrown at IDF soldiers and settlers during the clashes, in which up to 12 IDF soldiers and border policemen as well as an Israeli boy were slightly injured. Armoured personnel carriers were dispatched by IDF to Hebron. Other clashes between Palestinians and IDF troops occurred in the Aida refugee camp. An Israeli girl was injured by glass splinters when the car she was travelling in was hit by a stone near Ramallah. A policeman was injured by a stone in the El Arroub refugee camp near Hebron. Another incident involving the throwing of stones at a busload of children from the Jordan Valley settlement of Naamah occurred in Oudja; no injuries were reported. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 23 March)

95. On 21 March, a lone suicide bomber entered a Tel Aviv coffee shop and blew himself up, killing 3 Israeli women and wounding 46 other persons (see para. 68 above, table (b)). (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

96. On 22 March, violent clashes broke out between IDF soldiers and Palestinians in Hebron. The Palestinians threw stones and incendiary bottles at the soldiers who responded with tear gas and live bullets. The Alya Hospital in

Hebron reported treating 92 people wounded in the clashes, including 10 in serious condition. It was stated by IDF that soldiers had fired a number of live bullets when their lives were in danger. In another incident, soldiers shot and wounded two Palestinians at the Gilo checkpoint south of Jerusalem after one of them had attempted to enter Israel with a forged Israeli identity card. According to the IDF spokesman, soldiers first fired in the air but when the man did not stop and jumped into a waiting car, they fired at the vehicle, wounding the man and another man inside. A third man who was in the car fled towards Bethlehem. (Ha'aretz, 23 and 24 March; Jerusalem Post, 23 March)

97. On 23 March, a 60-year-old Palestinian resident of Tsurif village in the Hebron district died of a heart attack (see para. 68 above, table (b)) after the vehicle taking him to hospital was delayed at an IDF roadblock. Five incendiary bottles were thrown at IDF troops in Hebron, Bethlehem and Rafah without causing any injuries. Numerous incidents involving the throwing of stones at border police and IDF troops were reported in the Hebron area. Five incidents in which stones were thrown at Israeli vehicles and border police patrols occurred near Beit Hadassah in Hebron where hundreds of students staged a demonstration in protest against the closure and the Har Homa construction project. Dozens of youths threw stones at IDF soldiers but were eventually dispersed by the Palestinian police. Two border policemen and two Israeli citizens were slightly injured by stones during the clashes. Riots also broke out in Bethlehem, with stone-throwing incidents reported at Rachel's Tomb. In another incident, an Israeli citizen was slightly injured by stones thrown at his vehicle in the vicinity of the Harbata village near Ramallah. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 24 March)

98. On 24 March, hundreds of Palestinians clashed with IDF soldiers at Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem during demonstrations against the construction of the Har Homa settlement in East Jerusalem. Some 30 Palestinians were injured by rubber bullets and tear gas inhalation. Three Israeli border policemen were slightly injured during the clashes. In Hebron, scores of Palestinians threw rocks and stones at Beit Hadassah. IDF troops reportedly did not intervene and waited for the Palestinian police to disperse the rioters. Two incendiary bottles were thrown at IDF troops in the Rafah area in the Gaza Strip without causing any injuries. In another incident, two Palestinian residents of Rafah were wounded, one slightly and the other moderately to seriously, by IDF gunshots. It was stated by IDF that soldiers had opened fire at a roadblock near the Rafiah Yam settlement after the Palestinians had ignored an order to stop. In another development, a senior security source reported that GSS had recently arrested dozens of Hamas activists, most of whom were residents of villages located in area B. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 25 March)

99. On 25 March, fierce clashes between Palestinians and IDF troops broke out in Bethlehem, Hebron and other parts of the West Bank. In Bethlehem, during clashes between IDF troops and hundreds of Palestinians near Rachel's Tomb, 30 Palestinians were injured by rubber bullets while some 100 others, including several Palestinian policemen, suffered from tear gas inhalation and needed medical treatment. Three of the casualties were injured in the head and were listed as being in moderate condition. The remainder sustained slight injuries. One border policeman and an IDF soldier were slightly injured during the clashes that erupted when hundreds of students from Bethlehem University started

throwing stones and bottles at IDF troops posted near Rachel's Tomb. An Israeli driver was slightly injured after his car was stoned in the vicinity of Hussan village near Bethlehem. In Hebron, scores of Palestinians threw stones at IDF troops who responded by firing rubber bullets into the crowd. Other confrontations between IDF troops and Palestinian protesters occurred outside the Beit Sahur and El Khader villages where dozens of youths threw stones at IDF soldiers who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets. In another incident, an Israeli citizen was slightly injured by stones near the Hussan village. A firebomb was thrown at IDF troops on the Halhoul bypass road without causing any harm or injuries. A border police patrol arrested three Palestinian youths who threw stones at cars near the A-Ram junction in northern Jerusalem for the second consecutive day. No injuries or damage were reported. Jerusalem police also apprehended three other Palestinian youths who threw stones near the Western Wall. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 26 March)

100. On 26 March, dozens of Palestinian protesters were injured, mostly slightly, during clashes with IDF troops in the West Bank. In Bethlehem, hundreds of students staged a demonstration against the Har Homa housing project. Dozens of protesters threw stones at IDF soldiers who responded with rubber bullets. In another incident, hundreds of students from Bir Zeit University tried to storm Israeli checkpoints outside Ramallah. Some 20 demonstrators were slightly injured by tear gas while some 30 others suffered from tear gas inhalation. In Beit Ummar village (Hebron area), under curfew for the seventh consecutive day, dozens of Palestinian youths threw stones at IDF soldiers who responded by firing both live and rubber bullets. A 16-year-old Palestinian youth was moderately to seriously wounded in the neck by rubber and lead bullets. A 19-year-old Palestinian was moderately injured in the head by a rubber bullet. A foreign tourist was wounded when stones were thrown at a tourist bus near El-Jib, outside Ramallah. In another incident in the Ramallah area, a fire bomb was thrown at an IDF jeep without causing any harm or injuries. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 27 March)

101. On 26 March, hundreds of Palestinian students clashed with Israeli soldiers in the towns of Bethelehem, Hebron and Ramallah. Palestinian medical sources reported that more than 250 Palestinians were hospitalized for gunshot wounds and gas asphyxiation during the most recent wave of clashes in the West Bank. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

102. On 27 March, there were reports of an increase in the number of incidents involving the throwing of stones at cars in Judea and Samaria (West Bank): stones were thrown in the areas of Harbata (located near the Matityahu and Modien settlements), Ein Yabrud (near the Ofra settlement), and Hizmeh (between the Pisgat Zeev settlement and the Ramallah bypass road). A settler from Efrat was slightly injured during one of the stone-throwing incidents. In another development, several hundreds of Palestinian students from Bir Zeit University staged demonstrations on the southern outskirts of Ramallah that lasted several hours. The students, who tried to block the access road to settlements located south of the city, set tires, an old truck and garbage containers on fire and threw stones at IDF soldiers who resorted mainly to the use of tear gas in order to disperse them. Several youths were slightly injured by tear gas inhalation and were rushed to hospital for treatment. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 28 March)

103. On 28 March, violent clashes between Palestinian protesters and IDF soldiers erupted in Hebron. The protesters threw stones and firebombs at the soldiers who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, injuring 25 Palestinians, including members of the Palestinian security personnel. A 19-year-old Palestinian was injured by rubber bullets fired at the chest and the stomach. An Israeli border police officer was slightly injured by a stone. In another incident, Jewish worshippers were evacuated from the Western Wall after stones were thrown at border policemen on the Temple Mount. A woman settler from Kiryat Arba was slightly injured when her front windscreen was smashed by stones near the El Aroub refugee camp. In was reported further that several dozens of Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists had been arrested recently by the security forces on suspicion of involvement in "terrorist" activities. (Ha'aretz, 28 and 30 March, Jerusalem Post, 30 March)

104. On 29 March, a Palestinian student was shot dead (see para. 68 above, table (a)) and another critically wounded by IDF troops during riots at the Arak checkpoint near Ramallah. The student was the first fatality in clashes between IDF troops and Palestinians since the beginning of protests against the construction at Har Homa. The victim was buried during a funeral attended by some 5,000 mourners in Beit Sahur, a town populated mostly by Christians and which was the focus of recent protests against Har Homa which lies at its outskirts. In Bethlehem, students threw stones and firebombs at IDF troops and burned an effigy of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Up to 10 Palestinians were slightly wounded by tear gas inhalation or rubber bullets. Twelve incendiary bottles were reportedly thrown at IDF troops in the Hebron area on 28 and 29 March. Two border policemen were slightly wounded by stones in the Kalandia refugee camp. A shock grenade was thrown at a Jewish resident of the French Hill settlement in Jerusalem. The grenade exploded but did not cause any injuries. An Egged company bus was stoned near the Shu'fat refugee camp (West Bank). Two windows were smashed, slightly injuring two passengers. Stones were also thrown at another Egged company bus near the Neve Yaacov settlement without causing any injuries. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 30 March)

105. On 30 March, large numbers of Palestinian police prevented thousands of protesters in Nablus and hundreds of others in Ramallah from approaching IDF checkpoints which had closed in the towns. The Palestinian police also prevented demonstrators from approaching Joseph's Tomb where Israeli soldiers were stationed permanently. Dozens of youths who managed to reach the roadblocks on the outskirts of Nablus and villages in the Jenin and Nablus areas clashed with IDF soldiers, and threw stones and empty bottles at them. Three IDF helicopters hovered above Nablus and some 40 tanks were deployed on its outskirts, with senior army officials warning that IDF would enter the town in the event of riots near Joseph's Tomb. Other clashes broke out in Hebron and Bethlehem following the burial of a Palestinian student who was killed by IDF gunfire on 29 March. In Jenin, hundreds of Palestinian demonstrators set out towards an IDF checkpoint located on the Jenin-Megiddo road and threw stones at the soldiers who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets. Twenty Palestinians were injured by rubber bullets, while one was seriously injured in the head by a riot grenade. Other violent confrontations erupted in the villages of Yamun, Araba and Silat el Harithiya (Jenin area). One casualty was brought to Jenin Hospital in a serious condition. Riots also spread to East Jerusalem. In the Shu'fat refugee camp, youths threw stones at the security

forces. Border policemen responded with rubber bullets, slightly injuring three persons. In other neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem, youths blocked roads with burning tires and garbage containers. Palestinian sources reported that 50 persons were injured by rubber bullets and tear gas. An incendiary bottle was thrown at an IDF jeep near the Jalazone refugee camp (Ramallah area), without causing any harm or injuries. Three other incendiary bottles were thrown at IDF vehicles in the Hebron area, also without causing injuries. An IDF soldier was slightly injured during a stone-throwing incident in the Nablus area. An Israeli woman was also slightly injured when stones were thrown at the bus in which she was travelling. In another development, several rallies and marches took place in Gaza to mark Land Day and to protest against Israel's settlement policy. (Ha'aretz, 31 March)

106. On 31 March, 17 Palestinian demonstrators were injured, one of them moderately and the remainder slightly, by rubber bullets fired during clashes with IDF soldiers in the Jenin area. The clashes began when hundreds of youths gathered on the Jenin-Megiddo road south of the Ginat settlement and threw stones and an incendiary bottle at IDF soldiers who then used shock grenades, rubber bullets and gravel to disperse them. The Jenin Governor stated that the main reason for the clashes was the increasing presence of IDF in the area. (Ha'aretz, 1 April)

107. On 1 April, two Palestinian suicide bombers wearing uniforms of the Palestinian police blew themselves up (see para. 68 above, table (b)) minutes apart in the Gaza Strip. The first explosion occurred at 7 a.m. at the Netzarim junction, a few hundred metres away from the Netzarim settlement where a school bus carrying about 20 children was about to depart. Some 15 minutes later, a second suicide bomber blew himself up outside the Kfar Darom settlement, again just before a school bus was about to pass. The bomb exploded, apparently prematurely, as an Arab taxi passed by. Eight Palestinians were injured in both bombings. The Islamic Jihad took responsibility for the botched suicide bombings and announced its intention to carry out further suicide bombings in Israel. In another incident in the West Bank, a Palestinian policeman was shot dead (see para. 68 above, table (a)) by IDF soldiers during clashes in Nablus. The clashes erupted when some 1,000 Palestinian demonstrators broke past a Palestinian police roadblock and marched towards IDF soldiers in Israeli-controlled territory. The demonstrators began to throw stones, petrol bombs and cement blocks at the soldiers who responded with rubber bullets, tear gas and stun grenades. A military source reported that some troops fired live warning shots in the air. One of the bullets apparently hit and killed the Palestinian policeman. Violent clashes erupted again in Nablus after the killing, with IDF dispatching large numbers of troops to the area and placing a number of tanks on standby. In Hebron, a Palestinian was shot dead (see para. 68 above, table (a)) by IDF soldiers after he had ignored an order to stop. The victim was allegedly part of a group of thieves fleeing from Israeli police after being spotted trying to break into a warehouse in the Kiryat Arba settlement. (Ha'aretz, 2 and 4 April; Jerusalem Post, 2 April)

108. On 2 April, an IDF officer and some 12 soldiers were moderately to slightly injured after a firebomb shattered the windshield of their vehicle which then ran off the road and overturned near the Jalazone refugee camp in the West Bank. An Israeli baby girl was slightly injured by a stone thrown at her family's

vehicle near Bethlehem. An Israeli woman was slightly wounded by stones thrown at her vehicle near the Turmus Aiya village in the Ramallah area. A passenger was slightly injured when stones were thrown at an Egged company bus in the vicinity of the French Hill junction in Jerusalem. In Nablus, a crowd of about 1,000 demonstrators surged towards the Israeli-controlled area south of the town after the funeral of a Palestinian policeman who had been killed during clashes with IDF troops the day before. A large number of troops, backed by tanks and armoured personnel carriers, were dispatched to the site to deter the rioters. Other disturbances and stone-throwing incidents took place in the Hebron area. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 3 April)

109. On 3 April, 30 Arab schoolchildren were arrested for throwing stones and causing damage in East Talpiot. Police stated that the children, from the Arab village of Jebl Mukhaber opposite East Talpiot, had confessed to the acts which had resulted in damage to the houses and cars of Jewish residents. The parents of the children had to pay NIS 500 bail for the release of each child. In another development, the security forces arrested seven Palestinians from the Jalazone refugee camp (West Bank) on suspicion of throwing an incendiary bottle at an IDF vehicle on 2 April. Several violent incidents were reported in the territories, with military sources stating that the incidents were reminiscent of those that had occurred during the intifadah. Two incendiary bottles had been thrown at military vehicles in the vicinity of El Fawar village in the Hebron district. No harm or injuries were reported. Dozens of Palestinians had thrown stones at IDF troops near Rachel's Tomb, who had used tear gas to disperse the stone-throwers. An Israeli citizen had been slightly injured when his vehicle overturned after stones had been thrown at it on the Halhoul bypass road. Three other stone-throwing incidents took place near the Erez checkpoint in the Gaza Strip and in the Kissufim area. No harm or injuries were caused in either incident. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 4 April)

110. On 4 April, 17 Palestinians were slightly injured by rubber bullets fired by IDF while three Israeli border policemen were slightly injured by stones during clashes between IDF troops and Palestinians in Hebron. Other clashes erupted on the Jenin-Megiddo road where dozens of youths threw stones at IDF patrols which responded with rubber bullets and tear gas, slightly injuring one Palestinian. In another incident, scores of Palestinians cut electricity cables and sawed and burned some 30 electricity poles surrounding the Eli settlement. According to the settlers, IDF troops had arrived on the scene an hour later and dispersed the Palestinians but had made no arrests. A Palestinian undergoing a routine check at a roadblock in the vicinity of the Ganim settlement near Jenin attacked an IDF soldier and tried to grab his weapon. He was quickly overpowered by the soldiers and was slightly wounded. A number of firebombs were thrown at Israeli vehicles in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, without causing any injuries or damage. The driver of the Minister of Industry and Trade was slightly injured when his vehicle was stoned near Beit Ummar. The driver apparently lost control of the vehicle, which then overturned. The Minister was not in the vehicle at the time. In the Old City of Jerusalem, several dozen youths threw stones at policemen at the end of prayers on Temple Mount. No injuries were reported. In another development, it was reported that GSS had arrested nine members of the Izzadim Kassam in the Hebron area. The nine men were reportedly planning a "terrorist" attack in the centre of Israel.

Large amounts of explosives and other bomb-making material were found in their possession. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 6 April)

111. On 4 April, it was reported that five Palestinians, two of whom were suicide bombers from the Gaza Strip, had been killed during the previous week (see para. 68 above, tables (a) and (b)). Over 500 Palestinians were wounded in clashes with Israeli soldiers in the West Bank. (The Jerusalem Times, 8 April)

112. On 5 April, stone-throwing incidents occurred in the Tekoa settlement, with IDF troops firing rubber bullets to disperse the stone-throwers. (Jerusalem Post, 6 April)

113. On 7 April, the car of the Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office, Avigdor Liberman, was stoned near the Arab village of Zataria in Samaria (northern West Bank). Mr. Liberman and his driver were not injured but the car was slightly damaged. In other incidents, two passengers suffered slight injuries when two Israeli buses were stoned near the Damascus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem. A driver was slightly injured by broken glass when his car was stoned as he exited the tunnel road near the Gilo settlement in Jerusalem. In the Khan Younis area, Palestinian youths threw three incendiary bottles at an IDF outpost. The bottles exploded without causing any harm or injuries. An Egged company bus was stoned near Ramallah. Two other incidents involving the throwing of stones at IDF troops were reported in Hebron. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 8 April)

114. On 7 April, an Israeli settler shot and killed a Palestinian youth in Hebron. Immediately afterwards, Mohamed Abu Khorshaq, 58, was run over by a car belonging to a settler. In a separate incident, a settler fired at and seriously wounded a Palestinian youth for no apparent reason near the town of Kharbatha in the central part of the West Bank. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

115. On 8 April, 2 Palestinians were killed (see para. 68 above, table (a)), 7 others were moderately injured and more than 100 were slightly injured by rubber bullets and tear gas inhalation during violent clashes with IDF troops in Hebron. Five Israeli soldiers and border policemen were also injured during the confrontations which had begun when a Palestinian was shot and killed (see also para. 68, table (a)) by one or two settlers near the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque). The settlers claimed that the Palestinian had thrown acid or tear gas at them. Palestinian eyewitnesses claimed, however, that the shooting was carried out with no provocation. One eyewitness stated that the victim had been shoved and pushed to the ground by one of the settlers. He was then shot from a distance of one metre by the other settler while the first settler began firing in the air with an UZI submachine gun. Thousands of Palestinians attended the victim's funeral, shouting pro-Hamas slogans and calling for the expulsion of settlers from Hebron. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 9 April)

116. On 8 April, three Palestinians were killed in cold blood when an Israeli settler began to fire at random at the residents of the city of Hebron (see para. 68 above, table (a)). (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

117. On 9 April, 32 Palestinians were wounded by rubber bullets and tear gas during clashes with IDF troops in Hebron. The confrontations were sparked off

by the funeral of one of the three Palestinians who had been killed in clashes with soldiers and settlers in the town on 8 April. Some four border policemen were slightly injured by stones. In another incident in the vicinity of Beit Ummar village, an incendiary bottle was thrown at an Israeli vehicle, setting it on fire. The passengers managed to escape unharmed. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 10 April)

118. On 9 April, a settler ran down with a car a 65-year-old man from Beit Sira in the Ramallah area, causing serious injuries. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

119. On 10 April, violent clashes between IDF and border police troops and rioting Palestinians continued throughout Hebron. According to the IDF spokesman, 15 firebombs were hurled at the soldiers and border policemen but no one was injured. The Palestinians claimed that 13 rioters were wounded, mainly by rubber bullets. Clashes also erupted briefly in Bethlehem, where scores of Palestinian university students marched towards Rachel's Tomb where they stoned soldiers who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, without causing any injuries. In another incident, settlers from the Committee for Road Safety caught two Palestinians throwing stones on the Halhoul bypass road. The settlers reportedly beat the two 17-year-old Palestinians before releasing them. One of the youths reportedly needed treatment in a hospital. In a further development, IDF raided Tsurif village, arresting up to 30 suspected Hamas activists and confiscating manifestos and weapons. A senior security source stated that additional arrests were expected. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 11 April)

120. On 10 April, 157 people were reportedly wounded in Hebron in the wake of clashes between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli soldiers during the previous week. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

121. On 11 April, violent clashes between IDF and border police troops and Palestinians continued in Hebron. According to the IDF spokesman, an IDF officer and a border policeman were wounded. Several IDF and border police vehicles were damaged. During other incidents, an Israeli citizen was slightly injured by stones thrown at a car near Kadumim. A firebomb was thrown at a vehicle with Israeli license plates near the Yakir settlement, without causing any injuries. Another firebomb was thrown at the car of a settler from Netzarim. The firebomb exploded without causing any harm. In another development, it was reported that IDF had broken up the Hamas cell responsible for the kidnapping and murder of an Israeli soldier, the killing of some 11 Israeli citizens and the wounding of 49 others over the previous two years. Two of the "terrorists" were reportedly being held by Israel, two by the Palestinians, while one was still at large. A sixth member of the cell blew himself up at a Tel Aviv café in March, killing three women. (Jerusalem Post, 13 April)

122. On 12 April, violent clashes between IDF and border police troops and Palestinians continued in Hebron. Palestinian sources reported that five people were wounded by rubber bullets. According to the Associated Press, another Palestinian was slightly injured by stones thrown by settlers. Clashes also broke out at the El-Fawar junction near Hebron where IDF troops arrested one demonstrator. It was said that 110 incendiary bottles had been thrown at IDF

and border police troops in the West Bank during the previous week. (Jerusalem Post, 13 April)

123. On 13 April, two Israelis and a Palestinian were wounded when a Palestinian woman from Kalkilya opened fire at IDF troops and security personnel at the Allenby (King Hussein) Bridge border crossing. The woman, who was 26, married and the mother of one son, was a passenger on a bus returning from Jordan. She fired five shots at soldiers and security personnel before being overpowered by soldiers. She later stated that she had started shooting in order to avenge the death of her brother, an activist of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), who had died during interrogation at a detention facility in the Tulkarm area. In another development on 13 April, an IDF patrol discovered and safely detonated a remote-controlled mine placed near hothouses belonging to the Kfar Darom settlement in the Gaza Strip. In other incidents, an IDF soldier, a border policeman and three Israeli youths were injured by stones during riots in Hebron. Palestinian sources reported that three Palestinians were injured by rubber bullets fired by IDF. Four firebombs were thrown at a busload of IDF soldiers on the Halhoul road near the Karmei Tsur settlement. The firebombs exploded on the road several metres from the bus, causing no damage or injuries. (Jerusalem Post, 14 April 1997; Ha'aretz, 15 April)

124. On 13 April, two Israeli soldiers were slightly wounded after a Palestinian woman opened fire at them shortly after she had crossed the Allenby Bridge from Jordan into the West Bank. Suna Mahmud A-Rai, 28, attacked the soldiers in order to avenge her brother Ibrahim, a PFLP member who had died of torture in Ramleh prison during the intifadah. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

125. On 15 April, three border policemen and five Palestinians were injured during clashes with Palestinian residents in Tsurif village near Hebron. The violence broke out when IDF lifted the curfew on the village in order to allow residents to stock up on food. The residents staged a demonstration and threw stones and iron bars at the border policemen who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets. Other clashes between IDF troops and Palestinians erupted in Hebron and the surrounding area. In Hebron, Palestinians threw stones at settlers, smashed windows and damaged houses in the Jewish quarter of the town. An Israeli soldier was slightly injured by stones near Hebron. In another development, it was reported that IDF had uncovered three tunnels which were used to smuggle weapons from the Egyptian section of Rafah to the part under the Palestinian Authority's control. Dozens of such tunnels were reportedly discovered in recent years. (Ha'aretz, 16 April)

126. On 16 April, several incendiary bottles were thrown at Israeli vehicles in the Ramallah and Bethlehem areas, as well as near the Kalandia refugee camp (West Bank). No harm or injuries were reported. (Ha'aretz, 17 April)

127. On 17 April, IDF units discovered a 10-kilogram remote-controlled bomb during searches in Tsurif village, the home of a Hamas "terrorist" whose cell had killed some 11 Israelis. Military bomb disposal experts neutralized the device which was said to be similar to the one that had exploded in a Tel Aviv café in March. During the searches, soldiers also discovered a network of escape tunnels, a pistol and three clips of ammunition. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 18 April)

128. On 17 April, it was reported that more than 50 people had suffered injuries from rubber bullets and tear gas during the previous week in clashes between the residents of Sureif and Israeli soldiers. The demonstrations in the town were underscored by reports of the attempted rape of a 28-year-old woman by an Israeli soldier. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

129. On 18 April, clashes broke out between IDF soldiers, border police and the Palestinian residents of Tsurif village. The violence erupted when residents began throwing stones at IDF and border police patrols, slightly injuring a border police officer. Border policemen responded by firing rubber bullets. According to IDF, two Palestinians were slightly injured. Palestinians reported other casualties, however, including dozens of people who were injured by tear gas inhalation. According to the residents, soldiers also fired at water tanks on rooftops and smashed windows. They complained that they had been harassed by soldiers for no reason on numerous occasions. A lawyer resident in the village stated that soldiers had provoked the residents and had fired tear gas and rubber bullets wherever there was a gathering of people. He also stated that soldiers had fired at water tanks indiscriminately, perforating 300 of them, and that he had seen a soldier fire 14 bullets at a veranda, smashing all the windows although there was no stone-throwing at the site. The IDF spokesman stated that an investigation by the security forces had concluded that the residents' claims were false. Several incendiary bottles were thrown at an Israeli car near Bidya village, without causing any injuries. Other incendiary bottles were thrown at a military vehicle in Beit Ummar village near Hebron. No injuries were reported. Several stone-throwing incidents took place in Gush Katif in the Gaza Strip. (Ha'aretz, 20 April)

130. On 20 April, two incendiary bottles were thrown at IDF patrols in Ramallah. Several stone-throwing incidents took place in the Jewish settlement in Hebron. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 April)

131. On 21 April, four Palestinian pupils were injured by rubber bullets during clashes with IDF troops in Tsurif village. One of the injured, a 16-year-old youth, was rushed to hospital after being hit in the neck by a rubber bullet. The clashes had broken out when pupils had started to throw stones at IDF troops which responded with tear gas and rubber bullets. Villagers stated that soldiers had also fired at water tanks on rooftops. A border policeman was slightly injured by a stone in the Hebron area. Six incidents involving the throwing of stones at settler houses were reported in Hebron. No harm or injuries were reported. Three soldiers were arrested by the Jerusalem police on suspicion of shooting at two Arabs. The soldiers, who had been off duty when the incident occurred, claimed that they had asked the two Arabs who looked suspicious to identify themselves. The Arabs however ignored the order and fled in a car. The soldiers opened fire at the car, causing no injuries or damage. The case was reportedly submitted to the military police. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 23 April)

132. On 23 April, it was reported that Israeli security forces had carried out a crackdown against Hamas activists in the West Bank. Palestinian sources reported dozens of arrests. It was confirmed by IDF that 10 Arabs suspected of "hostile" activity had been taken into custody. The arrests came amid a renewed campaign by the Civil Administration in Judea and Samaria (West Bank) to uncover

Hamas fronts, including mosques, charitable organizations, health institutions and schools. During other incidents, three people were injured when stones were thrown at their cars near Beit Jala on the Bethlehem bypass road. Several stone-throwing incidents were reported in Tsurif village. Five incidents in which stones were thrown at border police troops were reported in the Hebron area. A border policeman was slightly injured in one of the incidents. Several other stone-throwing incidents took place on roads in the Ramallah area and in Gush Katif. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 23 April)

133. On 24 April, two Israeli women hikers were stabbed to death at Wadi Qelt. The Israeli police suspected that they had been killed by Palestinian "terrorists". In other incidents, an Egged company bus driver was slightly injured in the face when an incendiary bottle was thrown at his bus north-east of Jerusalem. A policeman was slightly injured on the head by a stone when Palestinian youths threw stones at the members of the Temple Mount Faithful movement in the Old City of Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 25 April)

134. On 25 April, two petrol bombs were thrown at border policemen in Tsurif village. The policemen responded by firing in the air. No injuries were reported. (Jerusalem Post, 27 April)

135. On 25 April, it was reported that the clashes that had taken place in the town of Sureif over the previous week had left at least 30 people wounded, including a youth who was seriously injured when a rubber bullet struck him in the neck. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

136. On 25 April, two Israeli women were killed in the Wadi Qelt area. The Israeli police asked the Palestine Police to assist in the search for the killers. (The Jerusalem Times, 2 May)

137. On 27 April, IDF troops shot and killed a Palestinian (see para. 68 above, table (a)) and slightly wounded one or two others during rioting in Haras village near Hebron. According to military sources, soldiers and border policemen operating in the area were attacked by Palestinians armed with stones and firebombs. According to eyewitnesses, soldiers fired rubber and live bullets at the stone-throwers. The stone-throwers denied the army's claim that firebombs had been thrown at soldiers during the confrontation. In another incident, border policemen found a knife in the pocket of a Palestinian from Beit Hanina at the A-Ram roadblock north of Jerusalem. The Palestinian stated that he had planned to stab a policeman or a soldier and was held for questioning. IDF troops, acting on intelligence information, discovered three bombs in a house in Dir Simat village in the Hebron area. The bombs were dismantled by IDF sappers and two tenants were detained for questioning. Two Arab residents of Silwan village were arrested in Jerusalem on suspicion of stabbing two Israelis in the Christian quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem on 26 April. The suspects reportedly confessed to the charges against them. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 29 April)

138. On 28 April, hundreds of Palestinian students shouting "Allah u Akbar" walked out from their school in Haras village to a mourning tent set up by the family of an 18-year-old Palestinian who had been killed by IDF troops on 27 April. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 28 April)

139. On 28 April, a Palestinian youth was killed in the village of Naras in the Hebron area, in the wake of an Israeli raid. The Israelis were looking for arms caches and Palestinians believed to be members of Hamas (see para. 68 above, table (a)). (The Jerusalem Times, 2 May)

140. On 29 April, IDF soldiers detained for questioning a Palestinian youth who had tried to seize a weapon from a soldier, caused a disturbance and thrown stones at the Civil Administration's Coordination and Liaison Bureau at Nablus. (Ha'aretz, 30 April)

141. On 30 April, a border police undercover unit shot and killed a Palestinian youth (see para. 68 above, table (a)) when the driver of the car in which he was riding tried to run them down at a Jerusalem roadblock. In another incident, the Hebron police and IDF troops raided the home of a Palestinian man in Hebron, where they discovered a machine gun, a hunting rifle, a Czech rifle, a metal detector and a box full of different ammunition. The Palestinian man and his son were taken in for questioning. In Hebron, two firebombs were thrown at Beit Hadassah. The bombs hit the window of a settler's apartment but caused no injuries. Another firebomb was thrown at a military jeep in the Jenin area. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 1 May)

142. On 30 April, Israeli soldiers gunned down a Palestinian youth near the village of Hizma in north-east Jerusalem. The car in which the youth was riding had refused to stop when waved down by a border guard patrol. The youth was unidentified. (The Jerusalem Times, 2 May)

B. Administration of justice, including the right to a fair trial

1. Palestinian population

143. On 24 January, the Israeli High Court decided to evict the Guzlan family from its home in the Jerusalem quarter of Silwan. According to the Court's ruling, the family was to evacuate the premises within a year and hand the key over to the Keren Kayemet le-Yisrael organization. The Court noted that the latter was the true owner of the land. The case had been in court since 1987. The Guzlan house, which comprises 15 rooms, was built in 1922. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

144. On 21 February, it was reported that a woman from Arab East Jerusalem was told by an Israeli court that she would need to take out a money order for NIS 20,000 in the name of the court if her case were to be reviewed. Attorney Usama Halabi, who represented the woman, stated that his client had asked for a restraining order to prevent her expulsion from Jerusalem after she had lost her permanent residency status. Mr. Halabi rejected the judge's demand, stating that it would set a dangerous precedent. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 February)

145. On 23 February, the Dotan Military Court overturned the death sentence meted out to a Hamas activist convicted of preparing the explosive device used by a suicide bomber to blow up an Egged company bus in Hadera in 1994, killing five people and wounding 30. Instead, the military court of appeals handed down a life sentence to the activist, Zayid Mohammed Badarna, who was also given an

additional 30-year sentence and 15-year suspended sentence for his conviction on seven counts. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 24 February)

146. On 28 February, it was reported that the Jerusalem Municipal Court had ordered that the construction of 35 buildings in East Jerusalem be halted on the grounds that they were being built without permits. Two of the buildings to which the court orders applied were mosques. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 February)

147. On 24 March, the High Court of Justice rejected an appeal by the Jahalin tribe against their eviction to a new site near the Jerusalem Municipality garbage dump, which they claimed was unfit for human habitation. The Court also reprimanded the tribe's lawyer after she accused Israel of "genocide" of the Jahalin, warning her that if she used such harsh terms again, the Court would impose a personal fine on her. The lawyer claimed that the structures that had been set up at the new site did not have doors or windows, running water or a sewage system. Furthermore, they were located on a mountain top despite the fact that the Bedouin are used to pitching their tents in wadis. (Ha'aretz, 25 March)

148. On 25 March, Sa'id Badarna, who was serving a life sentence plus 15 years for a "terrorist" attack carried out at the Hadera bus station in 1995, was sentenced by the Tel Aviv District Court to 18 years in prison for killing his cellmate. Mr. Badarna was incarcerated with Naza Abu Zina, whom he suspected of collaborating with the authorities. In August 1996, Mr. Badarna had beaten Mr. Abu Zina until he confessed. A day later, the prisoner died. Mr. Badarna was charged with murder. Since he was already serving a maximum sentence, however, the charge was reduced to manslaughter. (Jerusalem Post, 26 March)

2. Israelis

149. On 5 January, it was reported that the OC of the Zone of Interior, Brig. Shmuel Arad, had extended by six months the restricting orders banning six right-wing activists from entering the Temple Mount compound. (Ha'aretz, 5 January)

150. On 8 January, OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan issued an administrative order restricting the movement of a 17-year-old Alon Shvut youth to his settlement for a month, for security reasons. According to the lawyer representing the youth, he was the first Jewish juvenile to be issued with an administrative order since the days of Irgun and Lehi, two militant Jewish underground movements during the period of the British Mandate. In a separate development, another administrative order was issued against a settler from Kiryat Arba, preventing him from entering the territories for a month. (Jerusalem Post, 9 January)

151. On 19 January, the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court acquitted five Hai Vekayam activists of charges of illegal assembly and assaulting a policeman who had tried to prevent them from entering and praying on the Temple Mount. The judge ruled that the prosecution had failed to prove that the defendants had attacked the policeman and added that it was not illegal for them to gather near the Street of Chains entrance to the Temple Mount. (Jerusalem Post, 20 January)

152. On 2 March, the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court acquitted an extreme right-wing activist of charges of involvement in an assault against two Palestinians and damage to their property in Hebron in 1995. The judge ruled that the activist was not clearly identified as being one of the attackers, thus giving him the benefit of the doubt. The activist was accused of being one of three Jews who had entered a shop in Hebron, beaten its owner and his nephew, spat on them and turned over the merchandise. One of the attackers had also sprayed the Palestinians with gas. (Ha'aretz, 3 March)

153. On 12 March, the OC Central Command issued an administrative order restricting the movement of the former Kach spokesman to the IDF-controlled H-2 area in Hebron. In addition, the order banned the activist from leaving his home from between the hours of 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. for three months, and forbade him to enter the Palestinian-controlled H-1 area. It did, however, allow him to enter the area belonging to the nearby Kiryat Arba settlement. (Ha'aretz, 13 March)

154. On 26 March, the former Kach spokesman was acquitted by the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court of charges of endangering human life by carrying a knife. Police Commander Avi Cohen, who testified for the defence, stated that the defendant needed the knife for self-defence since his life had been threatened by Palestinian extremists. The judge agreed, found the defendant innocent, and ordered that the knife be returned to him. (Jerusalem Post, 27 March)

155. On 9 April, two settlers who had shot and killed a Palestinian in Hebron on 8 April were released on NIS 20,000 bail and ordered to stay out of Hebron for three months. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 10 April)

156. On 11 April, a settler from Dolev who was arrested for shooting and seriously wounding a Palestinian stone-thrower in Harbata village on 7 April was released on bail by the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court. The Court rejected a request by the police to extend the settler's remand pending the end of the legal proceedings against him. It prohibited him, however, from leaving his settlement and confiscated his gun. A police spokesman stated that the police had concluded their investigation and would recommend pressing charges against the settler who served as an officer in a combat unit. (Jerusalem Post, 13 April)

C. Treatment of civilians

1. General developments

(a) Harassment and physical ill-treatment

157. On 19 February, the Israeli police raided the offices of several Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem on the grounds that they were linked to the Palestinian Authority. They included the Small Projects Society, the Cartography Society, the Office for Social Affairs, the Um Imara School and the Nuzha Building which housed the Prisoners' Society. Employees were questioned about the links between those institutions and the headquarters of the Palestine peace delegation, Orient House. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 February)

158. On 25 February, the High Court of Justice accepted the State's appeal against the leniency of the sentence that the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court had meted out to two border policemen who had been convicted of serious abuse of Palestinians from the territories. The Court changed their two-year prison sentence to five years of imprisonment. An additional one-and-a-half year's suspended sentence remained valid. The State did not lodge an appeal against the lighter sentences issued against four other border policemen and soldiers on regular service who had been convicted on the same charges, claiming that they had not engaged in shooting and that their actions were of a less pronounced character. According to the verdict, the six posed as IDF soldiers on duty for two months and entered Palestinian homes in the West Bank, beating residents, looting money and jewellery and damaging property. In some cases, they tied their victims' hands and in one case they placed a Palestinian in the boot of a car and drove him to a plantation where they injured him with gunshots and left him to roll in his own blood. During the hearing, the Judge described the affair as reminiscent of the movie "A Clockwork Orange". (Ha'aretz, 26 February)

159. On 30 March, a 22-year-old Palestinian woman from Tsurif village in the Hebron area complained that a border policeman had tried to rape her and abuse her while in her home. The woman, married and a mother of three, charged that two border policemen had entered her home for purposes of search, broken furniture and caused damage to the house. According to the testimonies given by her neighbours, one of the border policemen had at one point come out of the house and waited outside, leaving the other policeman alone with the woman. The policeman was suspected of trying to rape the woman and then fleeing with the other policeman. A resident of the village, who is a lawyer and who had worked for the Palestinian Association for Human Rights and the Environment, claimed that the two border policemen had harassed, provoked and verbally abused other residents during the day. He alleged that, in one case, they had entered four houses to conduct searches and had severely beaten two residents. The border police spokesman reported that the complaint had been submitted to the Justice Ministry's Police Investigation Division. Tsurif village, the home of the suicide bomber responsible for the bombing of a café in Tel Aviv, was reportedly under IDF curfew for 10 consecutive days. (Ha'aretz, 31 March)

160. On 7 April, border policemen stationed in Hebron took control of the El Yakoubia girls' school when riots intensified in the centre of the town. They smashed doors and tables, urinated on the floor and wrote an anti-Arab inscription on the blackboard. A border police officer later arrived at the school to assess the damage and apologized to the school principal. The border police reported that the incident was being investigated. (Ha'aretz, 11 April)

161. On 23 April, Border Police Commander Israel Sadan ordered an inquiry against two border police officers suspected of ill-treating a Palestinian youth in Tsurif village. (Ha'aretz, 24 April)

162. On 25 April, it was reported that medical sources had confirmed that the type of tear gas being used by the Israeli army to disperse crowds in Sureif was on the list of internationally banned weapons. The sources, which based their report on diagnosis of victims of tear gas inhalation, indicated that exposure

to the gas could lead to paralysis of the nervous system and damage to the respiratory system. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

(b) Collective punishment

(i) Houses or rooms that were demolished or sealed

163. On 1 January, the Civil Administration destroyed five Palestinian-owned houses in southern Mount Hebron on the grounds that they had been built illegally. (Ha'aretz, 2 January)

164. On 2 January, the High Court of Justice barred the Security Services from sealing the Ras-al-Amud homes of four "terrorists" who had helped to plan several suicide bombings in 1995. The families of the "terrorists" appealed to the High Court of Justice after a sealing order was signed by the OC Central Command. The families claimed that the order violated the Basic Law under Human Dignity and Freedom, as well as international human rights norms. The Lod Military Court had recently sentenced two of the "terrorists" to life imprisonment for their role in a bombing. A third had been sentenced to five years of imprisonment, while the trial of the fourth was expected to be concluded soon. (Jerusalem Post, 3 January)

165. On 28 January, the Israeli occupation forces demolished four houses in the villages of Ein Yabrud and Deir Dibwan, located in area C of the Ramallah-el Bireh governorate, on the grounds that they had been built without a licence. (The Jerusalem Times, 31 January)

166. On 3 February, the Israeli occupation forces demolished four houses in the villages of Deir Basha, Zibdeh, Fandqumiyeh and Khirbeh Wadi Dauk in the Jenin governorate. The houses were demolished on the grounds they had been built without a building licence. The Palestinian head of the Civil Liaison Bureau was beaten by soldiers when he tried to intervene. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 February)

167. On 12 February, IDF demolished five "illegally" built homes in the Hebron area. The Civil Administration spokesman stated that the homes had been built over the previous year without the proper permits. The homes were built along the recently constructed bypass roads, with the intention of diverting traffic from areas populated by Palestinians. (Jerusalem Post, 13 February)

168. On 12 February, five Palestinian houses were demolished in the Hebron governorate by the Israeli authorities on the grounds they had been built without licences. Two wells were also destroyed and hundreds of olive and fruit trees that had been planted around the houses were uprooted. The action was taken without previous notification to the houseowners. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

169. On 20 February, five Palestinian landlords appealed to the High Court of Justice to forbid IDF from demolishing their homes in order to permit the construction of the Hebron bypass road. The petitioners claimed that when they had started to build their homes between November 1995 and January 1996, the construction was legal since the Hebron Municipality was authorized to grant

building permits in the area. However, in April 1996, OC IDF troops in the West Bank issued an order revoking the Municipality's jurisdiction over construction in the area in order to allow for the construction of road No. 35. The petitioner's lawyer claimed that IDF had practically diverted Hebron's borders in order to place the five houses outside of the municipal boundaries. (Ha'aretz, 21 February)

170. On 28 February, it was reported that the Israeli authorities had served the villagers of Faroush and Beit Dajan in the northern area of the Jordan Valley with demolition notices. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 February)

171. On 3 March, four Palestinian residents of the territories appealed to the High Court of Justice against demolition orders issued against "illegal" structures that were to serve as a mosque and a section of a school, as well as against two houses in the Nablus area. One of the petitioners, the headman of Nasariya village, claimed that the Civil Administration authorities had not planned for a mosque in the village populated by some 1,500 residents who were compelled to pray in a tin structure that did not provide protection against the winter weather. Another petitioner was the headman of Hawara village, who claimed that 60 pupils studied in one classroom at the village school. The villagers had therefore started to build a 150 square metre annex to the school. When they began the construction, they were served with an order to stop the work, followed by a demolition order. (Ha'aretz, 4 March)

172. On 5 March, the Civil Administration demolished three Palestinian-owned homes in Hebron and the surrounding area on the grounds that they had been built illegally. The families whose houses were demolished stated that they were forced to build without permits because the Israeli authorities did not issue any. On 6 March, additional demolition orders were issued against four families living near Idna village. It was reported that 700 Palestinian homes were slated for demolition throughout the West Bank on the grounds that they had been built illegally. (Ha'aretz, 7 March)

173. On 7 March, it was reported that Israel had demolished three houses near the Hebron governorate during the previous week on grounds that they were without a building licence. The owners stated that they had not received prior notification. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 March)

174. On 21 March, it was reported that IDF had demolished a house in the old part of Beit Hanina, in north-west Jerusalem, on the grounds that it had been built without a licence. The Israeli Defence Forces also confiscated three dunums of the owner's land for the construction of Route 4. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 March)

175. On 31 March, IDF demolished the home in Surif village of Moussa Ranimat (or Mohammed Abdel Khader Ghneimat), the Palestinian "terrorist" who had blown himself up in a café in Tel Aviv on 21 March, killing three Israeli women. It also imposed a curfew on Tsurif village and troops cordoned off the two-storey house where Mr. Ranimat used to live with his wife and four children. The demolition, which was carried out on the orders of OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan, came after the High Court of Justice had rejected a petition against the demolition by Mr. Ranimat's family who claimed that the

building was home to 30 persons (Jerusalem Times, 4 April). Mr. Dayan stated before the Court that the demolition of the bomber's home would serve as a deterrent to other suicide bombers. The family claimed that it amounted to collective punishment. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 23 March and 1 April)

176. On 13 April, IDF issued orders to demolish three houses in Sureif on the grounds that they belonged to Palestinians engaged in subversive activities against Israel. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

177. On 16 April, IDF demolished in Tsurif village the family houses of three members of a Hamas "terror cell" which had been responsible for the killing of some 11 Israelis. During the demolitions, which were carried out on the orders of the OC Central Command, Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan, residents defied the curfew imposed on the village and stoned soldiers guarding the demolition crews. IDF troops reportedly fired tear gas and rubber bullets in order to force the protesters back into their homes. Palestinians stated that at least five people had been wounded. On 17 April, IDF began to demolish the house of another cell member. An additional house, which had been sealed earlier in the week, was slated for demolition pending the outcome of a court hearing. (Ha'aretz, 13, 18 April; Jerusalem Post, 18 April)

178. On 16 April, IDF demolished two houses in Sureif that belonged to Abdallah Ghneimat and Abdel Rahman Ismail Ghneimat, whom Israel believed to be members of the Sureif Hamas cell. It also destroyed several caves in the area which it claimed were being used as arms caches. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

179. On 17 April, it was reported that IDF had demolished the house belonging to Ahmad Naji Abu Farah because of its tenant, Jamal Abdel Fattah Al Hor. The latter has been accused by Israel of belonging to the Hamas cell which was involved in the suicide bomb attack in a Tel Aviv café on 21 March. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

180. On 23 April, IDF troops demolished in Tsurif village the family house of a member of a Hamas cell who, according to the security forces, was responsible for the killing of 11 Israelis. The troops imposed a curfew on the village, and half an hour later, a bulldozer destroyed the house. After the demolition, the curfew was lifted and the closure was reimposed on the village. (Ha'aretz, 24 April)

(ii) Imposition of curfews, sealing off or closing of areas

181. On 1 January, IDF imposed a curfew on Hebron after an incident in which an Israeli soldier opened fire on Arabs in the city. The curfew was lifted by nightfall. (Jerusalem Post, 2 January)

182. On 15 January, it was reported that the only road that gave access to the Nuaman village had been blocked by "mistake" by IDF for 10 days. The Palestinian village of 250 residents, located south-east of Jerusalem, had been isolated during the entire period and its inhabitants could not receive basic services such as health care, gas and water (the main water pipe had been damaged by a tractor during the blocking operation). The village was reportedly cut off on 2 January when IDF troops blocked access to the village from Beit

Sahur. The other road leading to the village by way of Umm Tuba was blocked in 1995 with cement bricks, earth and stones in order to prevent the residents from entering Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 15 January)

183. On 3 February, IDF partially opened a section of Hebron's Shuhada Street. No private cars were allowed to pass through, however. Shuhada Street was closed to Arab traffic in 1994 after the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque) massacre. With no cars and a heavy military presence, businesses faded and numerous Arab residents had moved out. Shuhada Street, officially renamed King David Street, thus became a street where Jews predominated over Arabs. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 4 February)

184. On 25 February, a curfew was imposed on Hizmeh village north of Jerusalem after an undercover operation by Israeli soldiers in which one Palestinian man was killed and three others wounded. (Ha'aretz, 26 February)

185. On 3 March, pursuant to warnings of attacks, IDF declared the cities of the West Bank closed military zones. (Ha'aretz, 4 March)

186. On 8 March, IDF imposed a curfew on Beit Ummar village following disturbances there. Several residents were arrested. Villagers stated that the violence was a response to news that their village would not be included in the first stage of the pull-out by IDF troops, and that they had wanted to express their resentment at being abandoned by the Palestinian Authority. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 9 March)

187. On 12 March, IDF opened the Netzarim road to Palestinian traffic, with the exception of buses and heavy trucks. The road was closed to Palestinian vehicles in November 1994, in the wake of an attack in which three Israeli soldiers were killed. After several Palestinian demonstrations, it was re-opened to senior Palestinian Authority officials in January 1997. (Ha'aretz, 13 March)

188. On 18 March, the cities of the West Bank were declared closed military areas for fear of disturbances by Palestinians protesting the beginning of construction at Har Homa. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 19 March)

189. On 20 March, IDF declared Beit Ummar village a closed military zone following an incident in which dozens of protesting youths threw stones at IDF soldiers. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 March)

190. On 21 March, a total closure was imposed on the territories in the immediate aftermath of a suicide bombing attack in Tel Aviv. Tsurif village, the home of the suicide bomber responsible for the attack, was placed under curfew. Another curfew was imposed on area H-2 (the area of Hebron that is still under Israeli control) and Palestinians living in area H-1 (the area under Palestinian control) were ordered to remain in their homes. The curfew imposed on Hebron was lifted on 23 March. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 23 and 24 March)

191. On 23 March, IDF closed the section of the road between Rachel's Tomb and the entrance to Bethlehem to all vehicles after several incidents in which stones were thrown at Israeli cars. In another development, IDF lifted for a

number of hours the curfew imposed on Tsurif village - from where the suicide bomber who had committed an attack in a Tel Aviv café on 21 March originated - in order to enable residents to stock up on food. When soldiers ordered the residents of the village of 10,000 persons to return to their homes, they were met with stones and barricades. The soldiers responded by firing tear gas and rubber bullets and reimposed the curfew. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 24 March)

192. On 24 March, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak authorized a number of measures aimed at easing the closure. Among other things, basic foodstuffs were allowed to enter the Gaza Strip, while trucks carrying flowers and fruit for export to Europe were allowed to leave. Senior military sources underlined that all the approved measures were subjected to the necessary security arrangements. (Ha'aretz, 25 March)

193. On 29 March, IDF imposed a curfew on the Kalandia refugee camp near Ramallah after riots erupted there. (Jerusalem Post, 30 March)

194. On 30 March, IDF imposed a curfew on Hawara village south of Nablus when clashes between IDF soldiers and demonstrators had escalated. A curfew was imposed also on the Baqa A-Sharqiya village. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 31 March)

195. On 31 March, IDF lifted the curfew imposed on Tsurif village on 21 March, declaring it instead a closed military zone. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 1 April)

196. On 2 April, IDF imposed a curfew on the Jalazone refugee camp (West Bank) after an incident in which a firebomb was thrown at a bus carrying Israeli soldiers. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 3 April)

197. On 7 April, IDF opened Tulkarm and Kalkilya to traffic after they had been declared closed military zones. (Ha'aretz, 8 April)

198. On 8 April, IDF imposed a curfew on the H-2 area in Hebron (the area under Israeli control) when violent clashes which had broken out between IDF troops and Palestinian residents spread to both sections of the town. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 9 April)

199. On 10 April, a curfew was imposed on Sureif, northwest of Hebron, after the Government of Israel received news that the body of a missing Israeli soldier had been buried in the town. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

200. On 13 April, IDF imposed a curfew on the casbah and on Shallala Street in Hebron after rioting had broken out there. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 14 April)

201. On 18 April, IDF lifted the curfew imposed on Tsurif village, replacing it with an internal closure. (Ha'aretz, 20 April)

202. On 20 April, 50 Palestinians from Tsurif village managed to leave the village in order to meet Yasser Arafat in Hebron in order to urge him to work on the lifting of the curfew imposed on the village. (Ha'aretz, 21 April)

203. On 28 April, the IDF revoked the order declaring Tulkarm and Kalkilya a closed military zone. (Jerusalem Post, 29 April)

(iii) Other forms of collective punishment

204. On 17 January, IDF closed the area of the Hebron casbah for trade and groups of more than 10 persons after an incident in which a Palestinian threw stones and apple cores at soldiers stationed in the area. The casbah, which had only recently been reopened, remained closed until 19 January. (Jerusalem Post, 19 January)

205. On 24 April, it was reported that studies in Tsurif village had been disrupted as a result of the curfew and closure imposed on the village since 21 March, the day of the attack on a Tel Aviv café. The village girls' school of 1,400 pupils was closed for more than a month, since only three of its teachers lived in the village. The other teachers, who lived in other localities, could not reach the school because of the closure. Residents also complained about the shortage of food and medicines. A lawyer resident reported that several residents found outside the village had been arrested at an IDF roadblock at the entrance to Bethlehem on charges of violating the closure. It was also reported that several other residents who were staying outside the village in the West Bank were afraid to return to their homes for fear that they would be arrested upon arrival. (Ha'aretz, 24 April)

206. On 27 April, residents of Tsurif village claimed that soldiers had broken windows on at least 60 houses and shot at at least 100 solar heaters. The villagers said they were being punished for crimes that they had not committed and noted that they were under the longest curfew since the Oslo accords had been signed in September 1993. They stated that three villagers had died after being delayed at checkpoints for more than an hour on their way to hospital, while others were beaten for staying outdoors late when the curfew was reimposed after brief relaxations. In one case, a 22-year-old resident who was accused of stone-throwing testified to a human rights activist that he had been hit on the back with a helmet by one border policeman while another had held his head between his legs. In another case, a 70-year-old man with a serious heart condition and gangrene who was being rushed to hospital was not allowed through a checkpoint for almost two hours. Ali Abu Reish, a Tsurif resident and physician and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council who was present at the checkpoint, stated that soldiers fired rubber bullets at the engine of his car, presumably in order to deter him from trying to leave the village. A lawyer resident stated that soldiers had fired 15 rubber bullets at his house. He also claimed that hundreds of water heaters had been shot at, causing water to leak out and provoking water shortages. (Jerusalem Post, 27 April)

(c) Expulsions

207. On 15 January, the officer in charge of social services at Orient House, Azmi Abu Sa'ud, stated that the Palestinian Authority was in possession of a list of 233 Palestinian residents of Jerusalem whose residency papers had been confiscated over the previous two weeks. The residents had been issued with expulsion orders granting them 15 days to leave the city. Mr. Sa'ud claimed that the purpose of the orders was to limit Arab presence in Jerusalem. He

stated that the Israeli authorities had been resorting to such measures for a long time, but that they had intensified since the beginning of the year. Mr. Sa'ud claimed that the measures amounted to a kind of "ethnic cleansing". He indicated that half of the cases concerned women married to Jordanian citizens who had lived outside Jerusalem for more than seven years. Other cases concerned Palestinians who had moved to neighbourhoods located outside the administrative boundaries of Jerusalem. He claimed that the Israeli authorities used health insurance certificates to trace Arab residents of Jerusalem who lived outside the city. Finally, he warned that some 120,000 Palestinians, mostly students and labourers who worked outside the city, risked having their residency permits confiscated. It was estimated that 150,000 Palestinians were living in East Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 15 January)

(d) Economic and social situation

208. On 14 January, the Director of the Centre for Social and Civil Rights at Orient House, Azmi Abu Salud, reported that the Israeli Ministry of the Interior had seized 233 identity cards from Jerusalem Palestinians during the first two weeks of 1997. The 233 Palestinians were ordered to leave the city within 15 days. Mr. Abu Salud added that the files of 60,000 Jerusalem Palestinians who lived outside the city limits had been transferred from the Israeli National Insurance Institute to the Israeli Ministry of the Interior. Mr. Abu Salud indicated that all the rights of the residents concerned had been cancelled, as was their health insurance. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 January)

209. On 27 January, Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan, Commander of the Central District and of the 20 per cent of Hebron which remained under Israeli control, issued two orders restricting Palestinian construction work, under the pretext of providing security for the 400 Jewish settlers living in the city. The Israeli order affected at least 28 apartments in 20 different buildings whose owners had left due to increasing settler harassment during the 1970s, and who had decided to return to the city centre in order to restore their homes in the wake of the latest agreement between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

210. On 31 January, it was reported that, for the previous three weeks, residents of Hebron and the surrounding area had been unable to obtain permits to work in Israel since the Civil Administration did not provide the Palestinian Authority with the stamps needed for issuing such permits. The stamps were said to be necessary also for issuing passports, requests for family reunification and other types of permits. In a letter addressed to Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, the Gush Shalom (Peace Block) movement stated that the case illustrated once again that the occupation was continuing. (Ha'aretz, 31 January)

211. On 12 February, a retail market located in front of the Avraham Avinu compound in Hebron was being prepared for reopening as Palestinian and Israeli representatives unlocked and entered some of the shops to assess what repairs were needed. Under the Hebron redeployment agreement, the market, which had been a wholesale market before being closed in the wake of the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque) massacre, would open only as a retail market because of security considerations. An IDF officer stated that the reason for

the change was obvious: to keep large trucks from loading and unloading at the site something that would pose a security threat to the nearby Jewish settlement. Settlement leaders fought a long battle to have the market moved from the site, stating that it would literally bring thousands of Palestinians to the doorstep of their settlement. (Jerusalem Post, 13 February)

212. On 12 February, nine shops were reopened in the wholesale market of Hebron. The area, which was adjacent to the Jewish settlements in the Old City, had been closed in the wake of the Hebron massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque in February 1994. The area was to be rebuilt and converted from a wholesale into a retail market. In a separate development, IDF closed Shuhada Street to Palestinian traffic and refused to allow the municipal fire engine to pass. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

213. On 22 February, the A-Rai' Organization from Jenin called on international health organizations to pressure Israel to abandon its policy of forcing patients to obtain permits before they could be treated in hospitals in Jerusalem and inside Israel. A-Rai indicated that 72 patients had not been allowed into Jerusalem for treatment over the previous two months, although their medical reports confirmed their need for immediate attention. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 February)

214. On 21 March, it was reported that the Mayor of West Jerusalem had agreed to provide services to the Arab quarter of Bir Oneh in the southern part of the city near the settlement of Gilo. Although their quarter was included in the municipal boundaries in the wake of the June 1967 War, the 50 families living in Bir Oneh were deprived of municipal services and treated as though they were residents of the West Bank. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 March)

215. On 28 March, it was reported that Israeli health organizations had opened 25 health clinics and pharmacies in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem and the surrounding villages in an attempt to control health institutions in Jerusalem. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

216. On 28 March, it was reported that Israel was withholding from the Palestinian Authority about one billion dollars of customs and other taxes that it had collected from Palestinian merchants and workers since the beginning of the Palestinian Authority's rule. In a separate development, it was reported by Palestinian officials that losses from the renewed Israeli closure of Palestinian self-rule areas were estimated at about one million dollars per day in the form of lost export revenues. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

217. On 4 April, it was reported that the Jerusalem Municipality had refused to issue building licences to West Bank residents who owned land in Jerusalem. There were some 20,000 Palestinians who owned real estate in Jerusalem and in the immediate area surrounding it but who did not carry a Jerusalem identity card. In a separate development, it was reported that since January 1997, women from Jerusalem who were giving birth would first have to prove that they were living within the city limits before having the costs of the delivery paid by Israel's National Insurance institute. According to recent hospital statistics, the new regulations had affected the health insurance policies of 40 per cent of Jerusalem women. (The Jerusalem Times, 4 April)

218. On 5 April, the Palestinian Centre for Public Opinion based in Beit Sahur published a poll according to which support for the peace process among Palestinians in Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem was at an all-time low, while support for suicide bombings had reached its highest ever level. The poll, which was conducted among 470 adults and had a 3.5 per cent margin of error, showed that 30 per cent favoured continued negotiations, that 37 per cent wanted to abandon the peace process and that 19 per cent wanted to continue it with new delegates. The poll also indicated growing support for Hamas, with 18 per cent of the persons questioned stating that they would support the movement in local elections and 13 per cent more supporting independent Islamic candidates. Support for Fatah was 26.6 per cent. Almost 49 per cent supported the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv on 21 March, in which three women had been killed and dozens of people wounded. The percentage was described as being extremely high, especially since it concerned a specific attack and not a theoretical one. (Jerusalem Post, 6 April)

219. On 10 April, it was reported that, according to a public opinion poll conducted by the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Centre for Media and Communication, 63 per cent of Palestinian residents of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip were in favour of extended protests and demonstrations against Israel. Forty per cent of the 1,200 people questioned in the poll stated that they were in favour of attacks against Israeli targets, while 48 per cent opposed them. Thirty-three per cent expressed their support for suicide bombings. (Ha'aretz, 10 April)

220. On 13 April, a Palestinian official was quoted as saying in the Arabic daily Al Ayam that even though Israel had promised that it would allow 20,000 Palestinian workers who possessed work permits to return to their jobs in Israel after the closure on 21 March, only 5,000 workers from the Gaza Strip were actually allowed to cross into Israel. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

221. On 17 April, it was reported that a Palestinian official from the Ministry of Trade and Economy of the Palestinian Authority stated that while daily losses from the recent Israeli closure were estimated at US$ 9 million, the overall losses owing to the closure had reached US$ 6.5 billion and had led to record unemployment rates of between 60 per cent to 70 per cent. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

222. On 21 April, citing security reasons, the Israeli authorities began gradually withdrawing the work permits they had issued to Gazan workers to work inside Israel. In a separate development, the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Agriculture accused Israel of obstructing the export of citrus products. The Ministry stated that Israel had prevented 45 trucks carrying citrus fruit from leaving Gaza for Jericho for 10 days and had finally allowed only 10 trucks to pass. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

223. On 30 April, the Government of Israel allowed 56,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to enter Israel. However, a little more than half that number actually came to work. Kav La'oved, the workers' hotline, estimated that no more than two thirds would find work in Israel because of foreign workers who were reportedly paid much less than the employers would have to pay legally employed Palestinians. The Director of Kav La'oved, Hanna Zohar, stated that

Palestinians had no possibilities of getting jobs in agriculture, where workers from Thailand were employed. Jobs in the building sector were difficult to find because of a slowdown in construction. According to estimates by the International Monetary Fund, 60,000 Palestinians would have to work in Israel in order to prevent a further decline of the Palestinian economy. (Jerusalem Post, 1 May)

(e) Other developments

224. On 10 January, it was reported that, as part of their campaign against Bedouin families, the Israeli authorities had prevented Jahalin workers from going to their workplaces. The Jahalin were ordered to leave their homes, between Al Ezarieh and the Maaleh Adumin settlement, pursuant to a decision by the Israel High Court in May 1996. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

225. On 17 January, it was reported that earlier in the week, several units of Israeli soldiers and police had taken the first steps to force the Jahalin Bedouin to leave their homes and go to a nearby garbage dump. While a group of soldiers demolished their shacks, others used large trucks to remove personal items belonging to the Bedouin. The entire district was declared a closed military area. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 January)

226. On 27 January, confrontations broke out as six additional Jahalin Bedouin families were evicted from their homes by Israeli police, border guards and soldiers. Eight people were injured while four were arrested. (The Jerusalem Times, 31 January)

227. On 27 January, Israeli bulldozers destroyed the tin dwellings of the Jahalin Bedouin. The 30 evicted Bedouin were resettled in three metal shipping containers in Abu Dis, joining the two families which had been evicted before. The new site had no running water or electricity and constituted inappropriate grazing ground for the Jahalin's livestock. The Jahalin requested that they return to their land in Tel Arad, in the Negev, from which they were expelled in 1950. (The Jerusalem Times, 31 January)

228. On 29 January, hundreds of Hamas supporters crowded the streets of Gaza to give a heroes' welcome to the bodies of two Hamas "terrorists" (Hassan Abbas and Mohammed Jadallah) that had been returned in exchange for the Palestinian Authority's help in locating the remains of IDF soldier Ilan Sa'adon who was kidnapped and murdered in 1990. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 30 January)

229. On 30 January, it was reported that Israel had ordered the Palestinian Authority to withdraw the appointment of seven Palestinian diplomats it had accredited to the Netherlands, Norway, Turkey, Canada, Cyprus, Portugal and Yemen. The Coordinator of the Government's Activities in the Territories, Maj.-Gen. Oren Shahor, stated that the appointments were a breach of the Oslo accords since the Palestinian Authority was not entitled to conduct foreign relations, except in trade. (Jerusalem Post, 30 January)

230. On 11 February, an Israeli border police unit evacuated by force 28 Jahalin families from their encampment on the eastern ridges of Jerusalem. Their shacks were subsequently levelled by bulldozers. A number of youths were injured when

they resisted the border guards. Another 50 were arrested for a few hours. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

231. On 14 February, according to an account published that week by the Palestine Human Rights Information Centre, Israel had demolished 210 houses in the Jerusalem area between 1988 and 1995. Researcher Yunis Amouri stated that 32 houses had been demolished in 1996. He added that 21,000 families were urgently in need of housing in the Jerusalem area. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

232. On 19 February, 17 Jahalin Bedouin families were forced from their encampments on the eastern outskirts of Jerusalem. They were the last of 55 families who had been forcibly evicted by the Israeli authorities to make room for the expansion of the Maaleh Adumim settlement. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 February)

233. On 21 February, it was reported that some 500 Palestinians were told to leave Jerusalem within 15 days from the date of notification. The cases concerned married persons with Jordanian nationality who also had permanent residency rights in Jerusalem. All had applied for the family reunion programme and had filled in their application forms in accordance with the prevailing rules and regulations. Earlier in the week, a Palestinian lawyer, Ahmad Ruweidi, stated that some 50,000 Jerusalem Palestinians were in danger of losing their identity cards because the Government of Israel had forced them to live outside the city limits. Mr. Ruweidi indicated that Israel had recently started carrying out night raids on the residences of the Palestinians in order to confiscate their Jerusalem identity cards. Many were instructed to address themselves to the Civil Administration and to ask for West Bank identity cards. Mr. Ruweidi added that the Israeli Ministry of the Interior had refused to renew the identity cards of Palestinians who lived outside the country, although they were allowed to return in accordance with Israeli legal procedures. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 February)

234. On 25 February, the third anniversary of the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque) massacre, police prevented 10 Peace Now activists from holding a protest vigil at Baruch Goldstein's grave in the Kiryat Arba settlement on the grounds that they had no permit to demonstrate there. The activists wished to protest against the very existence of the monumental grave in the Meir Kahane Park, demanding that it be transferred to a cemetery. Hundreds of Hebron residents, including the victims' families, took part in a mourning ceremony at the Hebron Town Hall to commemorate the massacre. The speakers at the ceremony warned that the menace of massacre would continue to loom over Hebron as long as settlers remained there. (Ha'aretz, 26 February)

235. On 28 February, it was reported that Israeli officials had stepped up their raids on the homes of Jerusalem Palestinians within the walls of the Old City. Officials from the Ministry of the Interior and the Israeli National Insurance institute raided houses in the Iqbat A-Saraya and Khaldiyeh quarters and demanded that residents provide proof of their right to live in Jerusalem. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 February)

236. On 14 March, it was reported that the Israeli Ministry of the Interior had issued new instructions concerning the family reunion programme in Jerusalem. According to the new guidelines, applications were in the first phase to be submitted only after all the proper documents had been collected. If and when accepted, the applicant would then have to live for five-and-a-half years in Jerusalem on provisional documents. In the third phase, the Ministry would decide whether to grant the applicant the status of permanent resident. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

237. On 28 March, it was reported that, despite the permits they had obtained, Israeli authorities had prevented patients from the Gaza Strip from receiving treatment throughout the week in hospitals inside Israel and in Jerusalem. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

238. On 28 March, it was reported that the Alternative Information Centre in Jerusalem, which was concerned with the withdrawal of identity cards of Palestinians living outside the municipal borders of the city, had stated that the Ministry of the Interior in East Jerusalem had distributed hundreds of letters to Palestinian families who were forced to change their place of residence because of the housing crisis and the Israeli practices against them. According to the Centre, the letters instructed the families to hand in their identity cards and travel documents to the Israeli Population Registrar's office in Jerusalem, and to leave Israel on the grounds that their residency permits had expired. A total of 200 identity cards had been withdrawn since the beginning of February 1997. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

239. On 11 April, it was reported that the Israeli High Court had ruled in favour of measures taken by the Ministry of the Interior whereby Palestinians from Jerusalem who could not prove that their lives centred around activities in the City may lose their identity cards. The recent ruling threatened 100,000 Palestinians, some 60,000 of whom lived just beyond the city limits while another 40,000 were working or studying abroad. The Director of the Centre for Civil and Social Rights at Orient House stated that the case would be taken to the International Court of Justice at The Hague in order to ask for international protection. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

240. On 15 April, IDF set up a fence across Shehada street in Hebron. The soldiers were helped by the settlers. The 12-metre-high fence, topped with barbed wire, cut off the eastern sector of the city from the western. According to the Mayor of Hebron, Mustafa Natsche, the measure negatively affected the business of more than 100 shopkeepers. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

241. On 10 April, IDF moved into the town of Sureif in order to search for the body of Sharon Edri, an Israeli soldier missing since September 1996. The missing soldier's body was subsequently found. The Israeli authorities arrested a six-man Hamas cell on the grounds that it was responsible for the kidnapping of Mr. Edri, as well as the killing of 11 Israelis and wounding of 49 since it began its operations in 1995. Some 36 persons believed to be members of Hamas and of the Islamic Jihad were also arrested by IDF. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

242. On 17 April, it was reported that four elderly persons and a baby died in Sureif, because they were unable to receive urgent medical care owing to a continuous curfew that had been imposed on the town a week earlier. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

243. On 25 April, Israeli bulldozers destroyed Sureif's water network and closed off several streets by heaping up rocks and dirt. The town, which remained under curfew, continued to suffer from a shortage of medical and food supplies, including milk powder for children. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

2. Measures affecting certain fundamental freedoms

(a) Freedom of movement

244. On 10 January, it was reported that Palestinians living within the Green Line were no longer required to obtain a permit from the Government of Israel to visit the Palestinian self-rule areas, as had been the case before. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

245. On 23 January, the Centre for the Defence of the Individual (CDI) informed the military Advocate-General of its intention to appeal to the High Court of Justice unless IDF abandoned its policy of preventing West Bank residents from crossing into Egypt through the Gaza Strip. The Centre stated that the ban was a blatant violation of the interim accords signed with the Palestinians, was unacceptable and had to be lifted immediately. The Civil Administration officer in charge of international organizations, Lt.-Col. Alice Shazar, argued in response that the army's policy stemmed from security constraints and indicated that there was nothing preventing West Bank residents from travelling to Egypt by way of Jordan. The Centre replied that the journey to Rafah and, from there, to Egypt was much shorter and cheaper. It observed that in practice the ban prevented residents with scarce financial means from visiting their families in Egypt. (Ha'aretz, 24 January)

246. On 13 February, Israel closed the Rafah crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. The closure came after an incident in which a visitor from Egypt stabbed and slightly wounded an Israeli security guard at the border crossing. Israel announced that the crossing would be closed until an investigation of the attack had been completed. (Jerusalem Post, 14 February)

247. On 18 February, four senior economic affairs officials of the Palestinian Authority who were on their way to the Knesset to attend a meeting of the subcommittee on banking affairs were prevented by IDF from crossing a roadblock on the southern outskirts of Ramallah and were hence unable to attend the meeting. (Ha'aretz, 19 February)

248. On 6 March, military sources reported that married Palestinian labourers from the West Bank aged 25 and over would henceforth be allowed to enter Israel after security checks. The sources also reported that 150 employees of the Palestinian Authority would be allowed to cross from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip, in addition to the 400 employees allowed so far. Fifty additional Palestinian Authority employees would be allowed to cross from the Gaza Strip to

the West Bank, thereby bringing to 250 the number of employees allowed to cross into the West Bank. More than 30,000 Palestinians reportedly worked in Israel. (Ha'aretz, 7 March)

249. On 7 March, it was reported that Israel had turned down a Palestinian demand to allow President Yasser Arafat's plane to land at Gaza Airport. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 March)

250. On 18 March, the Head of the Civil Aviation Authority, Brig.-Gen. Fayez Zeidan, announced that an agreement had been reached about President Arafat's use of the Gaza International Airport. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 March)

251. On 26 March, representatives of the Palestinian Authority Ministries of Health and Agriculture denied that there had been a change in the Israeli policy of total closure of the territories. The Al-Quds newspaper published the names of eight patients who had been prevented from leaving the Gaza Strip for treatment in Israel, although they were in possession of the necessary permits. According to Dr. Mouhammed Salameh, the Director of the Ambulance Service, the patients were in very serious condition. Ata Abu Karesh, Director at the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Agriculture, stated that despite official Israeli declarations, restrictions on the export of agricultural produce from Gaza had not been eased. According to Mr. Karesh, the agricultural sector in Gaza incurred a daily loss of US$ 500,000 because of the export ban. In another development, it was reported that Palestinian writers from the Gaza Strip had been prevented from participating in a meeting of writers at Bir Zeit University. On 25 March, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council were prevented from leaving Gaza in order to participate in meetings of the Legislative Council's various committees. A Palestinian source stated that the issuing of permits was guaranteed for the following two days only after an intervention by the United States Embassy. (Ha'aretz, 27 March)

252. On 6 April, IDF allowed West Bank residents who were staying in the Gaza Strip to travel back home. Gaza Strip residents who were staying in the West Bank were also permitted to return to their homes. It also allowed Palestinians married to Jerusalem residents with Israeli identity cards to enter the city. It further allowed 22 Palestinian ambulances to enter Israel on an emergency basis, bringing to 36 the number of ambulances allowed to cross into Israel from the territories. One hundred Arab labourers with jobs in the tourist industry were also allowed into Israel. It was stressed by IDF, however, that all entrance permits were subjected to strict security clearances. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 6 April)

253. On 11 April, IDF prevented Palestinian Council members from entering Israel in order to participate in a conference in Jerusalem. The conference, entitled "The last chance to save the peace process", was to be held with members of the Labour and Meretz parties. The spokesman for the Coordinator of the Government's Activities in the Territories stated that the entry applications had arrived on the evening of 10 April and required a thorough examination, which had taken time. He stated that once their examination was completed at noon on 11 April, permits were issued to 30 of the 37 applicants. (Ha'aretz, 13 April)

254. On 13 April, it was reported that 20,000 Palestinian labourers from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank would be allowed into Israel. The move was approved by Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and the Chief of General Staff, Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak. The workers receiving permits had to be at least 35 years old, married, and would need to pass a security check. In addition, 50 Palestinian trucks would be allowed to transport goods daily from Ashdod Port into Palestinian-controlled areas. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 13 April)

255. On 15 April, as of midnight, Israel imposed an indefinite closure of the West Bank, preventing all Palestinians there from entering Israel, Jewish settlements and industrial zones. The decision was made by Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, the Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak and top security officials in the light of warnings of a "terrorist" attack. The closure did not include the Gaza Strip, and Palestinian labourers from that region continued to be allowed into Israel. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 16 April)

256. On 17 April, the security authorities eased the closure of the territories in several areas: Palestinian policemen were allowed to move back and forth between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with Israeli escort and 240 medical personnel from the West Bank were permitted to enter East Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 16 April)

257. On 25 April, it was reported that the Israeli security authorities had prevented two Palestinian Legislative Council members from leaving Gaza, thereby preventing them from participating in a Council meeting. Palestinian sources believed that the ban was due to the men being members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The sources also reported that 200 Palestinian labourers, most of whom were previously linked to the Popular Front, had their magnetic cards confiscated and had thereby lost their jobs in Israel. (Ha'aretz, 25 April)

258. On 25 April, it was reported that the Israeli authorities had taken new measures at the Karameh crossing point, making the passage of travellers from Jordan into the West Bank more difficult. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

259. As of 29 April, more than 5,000 Palestinian married traders and hotel workers aged over 30 could enter Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition, Palestinian medical personnel, teachers and journalists, as well as employees of international organizations and religious institutions, were allowed to travel to Jerusalem from the West Bank. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 29 April)

(b) Freedom of education

260. On 14 February, it was reported that Emmanuel Zissman, the Chairman of the Knesset Education Committee, had filed a police complaint against the Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem stating that the University was advertising itself as a degree-granting institution in spite of the fact that it was not accredited to grant degrees by the Council for Higher Education, as required by Israeli law. (Jerusalem Post, 14 February)

261. On 3 March, Palestinian students delivered a petition to the Prime Minister of Israel, calling upon the Netanyahu Government to reverse its policy of collective restrictions imposed on Palestinian education. The current travel restrictions that affected 1,300 Gazan students, academics and staff had been imposed when Israel closed the occupied Palestinian territories after the bus bombings of 1996. (The Jerusalem Times, 7 March)

262. On 7 April, IDF arrested five pupils from the Ta'amreh Secondary Boys School as they were going to school. Three of the students were still under arrest two days later. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

263. On 9 April, members of the Islamic Coalition of Students at the Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem reported that some 20 students of the University were arrested on 8 April, on suspicion of belonging to Hamas. The Israeli Defence Forces refused to either confirm or deny the report. (Ha'aretz, 10 April)

264. On 25 April, it was reported that four Israeli officers had raided the Al Khader Secondary School earlier in the month, threatening to close down the school and open fire at the pupils. A student from the Al Hajajeh Secondary Boys' School was injured by a rubber bullet when Israeli soldiers opened fire at the pupils as they were leaving the school. The Al Ya'coubieh Primary Girls' School, located in the Israeli controlled-area of Hebron, was exposed to daily provocations by Israeli soldiers who had injured a number of pupils. The soldiers also caused the death of Yacoub Fahmi Julani from the Al Hussein Ibn Ali Secondary Boys' School (see para. 68 above, table (a)). (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

(c) Freedom of religion

265. On 10 January, 80,000 Muslims took part in the Friday prayers of the Ramadan on the Temple Mount. Three thousand police and border police were deployed in the Old City and throughout East Jerusalem for fear of riots. Forces were also strengthened at roadblocks between Jerusalem and the West Bank, and temporary roadblocks were set up at various points to prevent Palestinian residents without permits from entering Jerusalem. Hundreds of Bethlehem residents gathered at the Gilo roadblock at the south-eastern entrance to Jerusalem in order to protest against the Israeli authorities who prevented them from reaching Jerusalem to pray during the month of Ramadan. They complained of being deprived of the freedom of movement and religion and said their prayers in the open. (Ha'aretz, 12 January)

266. On 27 January, Government officials denied charges by the Islamic waqf that Israel was conducting excavations under the Al-Aqsa Mosque after claims that new plaster work had been discovered in a nearby tunnel. Amir Drori, the Director-General of the Antiquities Authority, stated that there was no tunnel work under the Temple Mount but that workers had plastered walls to strengthen a tunnel for the use of tourists outside the Old City's walls. Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav also dismissed the charges as baseless. During a press conference held in Jerusalem on 28 January 1997, however, Sheikh Raed Salah, the Mayor of Umm el Fahm, displayed photographs showing recent plaster work which he claimed showed that Israel was conducting works directly under the Al-Aqsa Mosque which

were affecting its foundations. He claimed further that the cemetery of the Haram had also been damaged as a result of the excavations. Najah Dkeirat, head of the Islamic Heritage Association, warned that the digging could cause an explosion in the Muslim world. Mohammed Nusseibeh, the waqf spokesman, stated that the whole situation was unclear but indicated that people had become very suspicious of any Israeli excavations under or near the Al-Aqsa Mosque. He stated, however, that he had personally not seen any damage that he could attribute to recent Israeli excavations but indicated that the work on the tunnel opened in October had definitely affected the building above. (Ha'aretz, 27 and 29 January; Jerusalem Post, 28 and 29 January)

267. On 28 January, the President of the Al-Aqsa Charitable Society, Sheikh Ra'ed Saleh, produced a videotape to prove that fresh excavations were taking place in the south-eastern corner of the holy compound. He also noted that the southern wall was now used by Jewish worshippers as a place of prayer in a similar way as to the Western Wall. (The Jerusalem Times, 31 January)

268. On 31 January, some 3,500 policemen were deployed in the vicinity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and numerous roadblocks were set up at the entrances to the Old City as 200,000 Muslim worshippers took part in the fourth Friday of Ramadan prayers. Jerusalem Police sources indicated that 260,000 worshippers had attended the prayers the week before and explained that the decline in the number of worshippers resulted from their fear of being caught in violent clashes. (Ha'aretz, 2 February)

269. On 7 February, the last Friday of Ramadan, some 2,500 police and border police were deployed in East Jerusalem and the Temple Mount area while the police presence was stepped up at roadblocks located between Jerusalem and the West Bank in order to prevent Palestinians from the West Bank who did not have the necessary permits from entering the city. Thousands of residents who had arrived at the roadblocks without permits were sent back to the West Bank. In a related development, large numbers of police and IDF soldiers were deployed around the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, preventing worshippers from using the road leading to the town's wholesale market located near the Avraham Avinu settler compound. No confrontations were reported. (Ha'aretz, 9 February)

270. On 3 March, IDF declared the cities of Jenin, Tulkarm, Ramallah, Kalkilya and Bethlehem closed military zones for Muslim worshippers for fear of disturbances in protest against the decision by the Government of Israel to build a new Jewish settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) in East Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 4 March)

271. On 22 March, the Ibrahimi Mosque was open for prayers but owing to the curfew imposed on the Palestinian sector of Hebron, only waqf leaders were allowed to pray there. (Jerusalem Post, 23 March)

272. On 28 March, it was reported that hundreds of Palestinian Christians from Bethlehem and Ramallah were turned back by Israeli soldiers at roadblocks when they tried to join worshippers in the Old City of Jerusalem for the Good Friday ceremonies. They were told that they had no permits to enter Jerusalem. (The Jerusalem Times, 4 April)

273. On 17 April, the Chief of General Staff, Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak, allowed 600 Christian families and 200 religious leaders from the territories to enter Jerusalem for the Orthodox Easter celebrations. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 18 April)

(d) Freedom of expression

274. On 20 January, the Muslim Youth Association and the Islamic Charity Organization in Hebron were reopened after being closed for ten months upon the order of OC Central Command on suspicion of links with Hamas. The authorization to unseal the welded doors of the offices, located in area H-1 which had been turned over to the Palestinian Authority the day before, was given by the head of the Palestinian preventive security service, Jibril Rajoub. (Ha'aretz, 21 January)

275. On 10 March, IDF soldiers prevented journalists and television crews from covering a clash between IDF soldiers and Palestinians who were demonstrating in Hebron against the confiscation of their land for the construction of a new security road near the Kiryat Arba settlement. When the journalists and reporters ignored an order to leave the site, soldiers forcibly pushed them away. Journalists who witnessed the incident stated that several soldiers attacked a female reporter, beat her and threw her to the ground. The woman fainted and needed medical treatment. Commenting on the incident, the spokesman of the IDF Central Command stated that the journalist was the one who had caused the disturbance and indicated that, after medical treatment, she would be taken in for questioning on charges of attacking a policeman. On 11 March, IDF troops continued to prevent journalists from approaching the site where bulldozers were carrying out ground-levelling work for the paving of the security road. Palestinians whose land had been confiscated at the order of the OC Central Command were also prevented from entering their land by the security forces and roadblocks. (Ha'aretz, 11 March)

276. On 31 March, IDF barred journalists from entering Tsurif village to watch the demolition of the home belonging to the Palestinian suicide bomber who had blown himself up in a Tel Aviv café on 21 March. (Jerusalem Post, 1 April)

3. Information on the activities of settlers affecting the civilian population

277. On 9 January, it was reported that the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria (West Bank) and Gaza had recently launched a campaign in order to draw attention to what it claimed were scores of illegal buildings that Palestinians were constructing throughout the territories in an attempt to ensure that they came under Palestinian jurisdiction after the next redeployment stage. (Jerusalem Post, 9 January)

278. On 14 January, a Palestinian living near the Kiryat Arba settlement complained that he had to move an old wire fence off his land after settlers had discarded it there to make way for a new security fence. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 15 January)

279. On 18 January, an Arab press photographer lodged a complaint with the Israeli police after a settler had hit him with the butt of a rifle and broken his finger. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 19 January)

280. On 19 January, the Judea and Samaria (West Bank) district police filed a charge sheet against the spokesman for the Hebron settlers. The settler spokesman was arrested at the beginning of December on charges of pulling down the divides separating the prayer halls for Jews and Muslims in the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque) and assaulting a policeman who had tried to arrest him. He denied the charges. (Ha'aretz, 20 January)

281. On 22 January, IDF and the police made a commitment before the High Court of Justice to protect a Palestinian house near the Kiryat Arba settlement against attacks by settlers. The petitioner, Shakar Da'ana, claimed that settlers had been harassing him and his family for the past 20 years. Mr. Da'ana stated that the settlers had caused his family physical and mental damage, had encroached on their land, thrown stones and bottles on their home and repeatedly threatened to kill or expel them. (Ha'aretz, 23 January)

282. On 22 January, settlers from the Kiryat Arba settlement and the Kharsinah Quarter used bulldozers to level vast tracts of agricultural land in the Baqa' area on the north-eastern side of Hebron. The settlers were backed by the army, police and officers of the Israeli Civil Administration. Landowner Sharif Abdel Rahman estimated that some 15 dunums of land, including vineyards and olive groves, had been levelled. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

283. On 24 January, it was reported that Jewish settlers had demolished an old house owned by the Hamoùz family in the so-called Jewish enclave in Hebron. Settlers sources claimed that the house was demolished in order to make room for the expansion of the Jewish quarter in the city. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

284. On 30 January, settlers from Hebron laid the foundations for the expansion of their settlement in the town's Old City. In addition, they cleared the ruins of an adjacent Arab building that Palestinians intended to restore. Palestinian sources suggested that the settlers wanted to take control of the building. (Ha'aretz, 31 January)

285. On 13 February, settlers and Palestinian residents clashed in Hebron when settlers tried to prevent Palestinian shopkeepers from opening their businesses in the town's wholesale market opposite the Avraham Avinu settler compound. Some 20 Israeli soldiers arrived at the scene of the confrontation and pushed back the crowd of some 100 Palestinians. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 14 February)

286. On 23 February, a Palestinian female journalist filed a complaint with the Jerusalem district police against settlers from Hebron whom she accused of humiliating her and threatening to rape her in the presence of IDF soldiers and border policemen. The police stated that her complaint would be examined. (Ha'aretz, 24 February)

287. On 2 March, a settler from the Itamar settlement near Nablus disrupted the work of a first-aid team giving resuscitation treatment to a 45-year-old Palestinian man from the nearby Marda village who suffered from brain damage. The incident began when the settler arrived on the scene and asked about the nationality of the patient. When he learned that he was Palestinian, he shouted at the paramedics: "Why are you treating a murderer?" and "you are murderers". According to the paramedics, the settler approached them and started cursing and spitting. In addition, he attacked a policewoman who asked him to leave the site. Police reinforcements were dispatched to the scene and three policemen were wounded while trying to overpower the settler. Half an hour later, the Palestinian was pronounced dead. A paramedic stated that it was impossible to determine whether the results of the resuscitation treatment would have been different had the disturbance not occurred. He indicated, however, that disturbances and the gathering of a large number of people had a negative impact on the outcome of the resuscitation treatment. (Ha'aretz, 4 March)

288. On 6 March, settlers from the Qdumim settlement began uprooting the olive groves in the village of Kufr Qaddoum with the aim of paving a new road. The seven-kilometre road was to connect the settlement with a historical site located north of the Palestinian village, which the settlers claim is of Jewish origin. After serious clashes, an agreement was reached to halt levelling work. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

289. On 20 March, five Jewish families moved into houses in the East Jerusalem quarter of Silwan. Silwan is the quarter claimed by the settlers to be the historical site of the City of David. The takeover brings to 10 the number of houses in the area seized by extremist Jewish groups. According to Palestinian statistics, the settlers have succeeded in purchasing 53 houses in Arab Jerusalem. Concerned over the number of Arab houses that had fallen into the hands of extremist Jewish groups, the Mufti of Jerusalem recently issued a fatwa prohibiting the sale of real estate to Jews. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

290. On 25 March, it was reported that settler children in Hebron were attacking Arabs with tear-gas canisters given to them by their parents. One Palestinian recounted an incident he had witnessed the week before when two 10-year-old settler children came across two Arab youths near an IDF outpost. Without any provocation on the part of the Arabs, they took out their gas canisters and sprayed the faces of the youths, after which they ran towards the soldiers. When one of the Arabs fell to the ground, they returned and kicked him. The other Arab tried to catch the children but was pushed away by the soldiers. According to the Hebron settlement spokesman Noam Arnon, there had been cases of Arab harassment of Jewish boys and girls, including spitting, verbal abuse and sexual harassment. The spokesman claimed that the number of cases was on the rise and he assumed that parents provided their children with tear-gas canisters for defence. (Ha'aretz, 25 March)

291. On 7 April, a settler from Dolev (north of Ramallah) shot and wounded two Palestinians in Harbata village after his car was hit by stones. One Palestinian was injured in the chest and was in serious condition at Ramallah Hospital. The other Palestinian was injured in the leg, although according to the police, he did not suffer gun wounds but fell when he ran to help the other Palestinian. Residents of Harbata claimed that the two Palestinians had nothing

to do with the stone-throwing. One resident stated that the incident had occurred when school children began to throw stones at the settler who then got out of his car, knelt on one knee and opened fire above their heads. The settler reportedly returned to his car and drove on. When his car was stoned again several metres further on, he opened fire through the front passenger window, again got out of the car and opened fire from 50 metres, this time hitting the two Palestinians. Other residents stated that the settler frequently drove through their village instead of taking the bypass road. They claimed that he used to drive through the centre of the village in a provocative manner, putting pedestrians at risk. In another incident, the police detained a settler in Hebron after he had fired warning shots in the air when he was stoned by a large group of Palestinians near the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ibrahimi Mosque). No injuries were reported. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 8 April)

292. On 8 April, a Palestinian photographer who had witnessed violent clashes between Palestinians and IDF troops in Hebron claimed that he saw a settler fire about 30 bullets from the vicinity of Beit Hadasssah towards Shallala Street before being overpowered by a soldier. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 9 April)

293. On 9 April, the police detained a settler near Ramallah after he had fired shots in the air. The settler told the police that he had been run off the road and stoned by a mob of Palestinians before being rescued by Israeli soldiers. Palestinian eyewitnesses claimed, however, that the shooting was unprovoked. Dozens of settlers reportedly protested outside the police station where the settler was being questioned. (Jerusalem Post, 10 April)

D. Treatment of detainees

1. Measures concerning the release of detainees

294. On 9 February, Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi announced his refusal to recommend pardon for three Palestinian female prisoners whom the Prime Minister's office wanted released. The three women were: Su'ad Darwish, convicted of the murder of an Israeli in 1990; Wafa Musabah, who tried to kill a border policeman near Jerusalem in 1995; and Nafa Gimar, who tried to kill a prison warden in 1989. (Jerusalem Post, 10 February)

295. On 11 February, Israel released between 23 and 30 female prisoners who had been arrested before the signing of the 1995 Interim Accord between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Hundreds of friends and relatives, including Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and other Palestinian notables, welcomed the freed Palestinian women prisoners as they arrived in Ramallah on 12 February. (Ha'aretz, 11 February; Jerusalem Post, 13 and 14 February)

296. On 11 February, 30 Palestinian women prisoners were released from Israeli prisons and driven in buses to Ramallah. Prisoner Lamia Ma'rouf was taken immediately to Lydda Airport and deported to Brazil where she was reunited with her daughter. Her husband is serving a life sentence in Israel. The one remaining female prisoner, who is only 15 years old, continues in detention after allegedly trying to stab an Israeli policeman. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

297. On 20 April, a founding member of Hamas, Abdel Aziz Rantisi, was released from Beersheba Prison after serving three-and-a-half years of his seven-year sentence. Mr. Rantisi was the spokesman for the 415 Palestinians from various Islamic movements who were exiled to Lebanon in December 1992. He was sentenced by an Israeli court on charges of incitement. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

2. Other information concerning detainees

298. On 1 January, the High Court of Justice criticized IDF for holding hearings on the extension of detention of Palestinians inside detention facilities. The Court's criticism came in response to a petition filed by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel demanding that IDF officers in the territories be ordered to transfer such hearings from the detention facilities to military courts. The lawyer representing the Association claimed that the holding of the hearings within the detention facilities and the concomitant lack of openness failed to show that justice was done. He charged further that IDF did not always arrange for hearings to be held in the presence of judges or for detainees to benefit from the assistance of lawyers. (Ha'aretz, 2 January)

299. On 5 January, a member of the Knesset (Meretz party), Dedi Zuker, called for an overall revision of administrative detentions and their progressive abolition, with the exception of extreme cases. Mr. Zuker, who made his statement during a visit to Megiddo Prison where 259 administrative detainees were held, revealed that more than one half of the administrative detainees had been incarcerated for more than a year. Among them, 40 had been jailed for more than two years while 20 had been detained for three years. Mr. Zuker observed that those facts proved that administrative detention had become a punishment without trial. (Ha'aretz, 6 January)

300. On 8 January, the wife of the former spokesman for the Kach movement defended a decision of the Prisons Service to allow her and her children to spend the Shabbat with her husband in Eyal prison twice during the previous two months. The woman stated that the decision was backed by the High Court of Justice. By contrast, none of the 35 Arab administrative detainees detained in the same prison received a visit from their families. (Jerusalem Post, 9 January)

301. On 8 January, a date that coincided with Martyrs' Day, the Palestinian Prisoners' Society stated that 100 Palestinian prisoners had died in Israeli prisons since June 1967. The Society indicated that the prisoners had died as a result of torture, unhealthy conditions in detention, and avoidable diseases. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

302. On 10 January, it was reported that Amnesty International stated in a document that the Government of Israel had been condoning the mental and physical torture of Palestinian prisoners since 1987, using those methods to preempt the activities of armed Palestinian groups. The report disclosed that hospitalized prisoners were being chained to their beds. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

303. On 12 January, a Palestinian prisoner, Riyad Mahmoud Adwan, died in Beersheba prison, an isolation prison which is notorious for its bad conditions of detention. Mr. Adwan, who suffered from respiratory problems, had an attack which resulted in suffocation. He was not taken immediately to the hospital, since a transfer requires administrative arrangements. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 January)

304. On 2 February, the Gaza-based A-Damir human rights organization stated that more than 3,000 Palestinians continued to be detained in prisons in Israel. According to the organization, the Palestinians were held in some 12 prisons and detention facilities inside Israel: 291 were detained without trial; 357 were under the age of 18; 480 were either ill or old. The list also included 69 Israeli Arabs who had been arrested for political reasons. (Ha'aretz, 3 February)

305. On 6 February, a senior Palestinian official in charge of prisoners' affairs and the head of the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, Issa Karaki, charged that the Israeli authorities had prevented him from meeting prisoners in Ashkelon Prison. According to Mr. Karaki, the ban boded ill for the upcoming talks on prisoner release. (Ha'aretz, 7 February)

306. On 9 February, four Palestinian youths held in Sharon Prison for security-related offences petitioned the Tel Aviv District Court to order the Prisons Service to allow them to pursue regular studies in the prison, as was the case with Israeli youths who were detained for criminal offences. Their lawyer, who was from the International Association for the Rights of the Child, claimed that the Prisons Service was not fulfilling its duty by enabling Palestinian youths detained in Israel to pursue formal and regular studies. According to the lawyer, the Prisons Service did not have a programme of studies for security detainees or adults, which amounted to discrimination in comparison with Israeli prisoners. (Ha'aretz, 10 February)

307. On 10 February, it was reported that the High Court of Justice had decided to delay by one week an appeal by a Palestinian security detainee to allow him to meet with a lawyer and to prohibit GSS from torturing him. Lawyer Lea Tsemel, who submitted the appeal on behalf of the detainee and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, charged that the Court's decision had voided the appeal of any content, practically giving GSS a free hand to torture the detainee. The detainee had reportedly been arrested two months earlier and had been held at the Russian Compound interrogation wing since then on charges of involvement with Hamas and of illegal possession of arms. According to the lawyer, the charges were not sufficiently serious to justify the decision not to allow the detainee to meet with a lawyer. In addition, the detainee's family expressed fear that the ban was aimed at concealing from the public the fact that the detainee was being subjected to torture. In a related development, the lawyer sent an affidavit to the Justice Ministry's police investigation division concerning another detainee who had been arrested two months earlier on the same charges. In the affidavit, the detainee described the torture he had been subjected to during GSS interrogation. He stated that during his 30 days of interrogation, he had been held in the "shabah" position (i.e., seated on a low stool with his hands tied behind his back, his legs tied and a sack over his head). One night, he had been tied with his hands behind his back to what he

described as the "confession pipe". The pipe was located in an open courtyard and the detainee had been tied to it and left outside all night to freeze to death. He stated that on several occasions he had been pinned to the ground with his hands tied behind his back and his head lifted while interrogators trampled on his stomach and chest. He alleged that he had been forced to perform repeated kneeling exercises and had to count out loud from one to 200 and backwards, all under the watchful eyes of the interrogators. He added that the exercises and the interrogations were accompanied by slaps on the face. Once, an interrogator named Martin had shaken him violently on two occasions and had threatened to hurl the heavy leg shackles at his head. The detainee stated that he had broken down and had made a confession when his interrogators told him that his wife had been arrested, showing him her shawl, head scarf and photograph. (Ha'aretz, 10 February)

308. On 14 February, it was reported that 5,000 Palestinian male prisoners were still held in Israeli jails, of whom an estimated 600 were detained without trial under administrative detention. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 February)

309. On 16 February, it was reported that a Palestinian detainee imprisoned in the Megiddo military detention facility had appealed to the High Court of Justice to oblige Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to provide all detainees held in tents with heating equipment. The petitioner, who had been arrested three months earlier on charges of involvement with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, claimed through a lawyer from the Palestinian Association for Human Rights and the Environment that he and 600 other detainees were kept in tents that were pitched in open fields and did not provide any shelter from the wind, cold or rain. (Ha'aretz, 16 February)

310. On 20 February, 1,200 Palestinian detainees in the Megiddo and Ashkelon prisons staged a one-day hunger strike to remind the world that Israel continued to incarcerate 300 administrative detainees without charge or trial. According to an Israeli military source, a number of detainees in other prisons also joined the strike. Some 600 Palestinians, most of whom had been committed for trial while others were under administrative detention, were being held in Ashkelon prison. Approximately 600 Palestinians, half of whom were under administrative detention, were being detained at the Megiddo military prison. In 1996, 140 detainees had their detention period extended, some of them for the eighth time. (Ha'aretz, 21 February)

311. On 20 February, the Association of Physicians for Human Rights condemned the decision by the Ministerial Committee on GSS to extend by two months the permission given to GSS to use special interrogation methods against Palestinian suspects. The Association charged that it not only legitimized torture but that the "ticking bomb" argument did not make sense. According to that argument, moderate physical pressure was permitted on detainees suspected of holding information that would promptly thwart a mass attack or prevent great danger. In order to counter the "ticking bomb" argument, the Association compiled a detailed account of 50 cases of Palestinians who had appealed to the High Court of Justice in 1996 against their torture by GSS. The Association stated that a large number of cases had been covered in the daily press and that the period that had elapsed from the arrest of the suspects and the beginning of torture until their appeal varied from 10 days to three months. According to the

Association, the explanation given by senior GSS officials that the special interrogation methods were used only in "ticking bomb" cases was false or at best problematic. The Association noted further that in all but three cases of appeal to the High Court of Justice, the Court had issued orders instructing GSS to stop using special interrogation methods, which included such procedures as shaking, hanging detainees on a hook attached to a door, tying them up in painful positions, placing malodorous sacks over their heads, playing loud music incessantly and subjecting them to sleep deprivation. The Association was of the opinion that the fact that torture was halted after the appeals proved that other means existed, apart from torture, to guarantee security. Finally, the Association pointed out that some of the petitioners had been released while others had been placed under administrative detention. It concluded that, even after the torture, GSS could not come up with reasons to put them on trial. (Ha'aretz, 21 February)

312. On 28 February, a report prepared by the PA Ministry of Information and the Prisoners' Society revealed that 83 Palestinians had died in Israeli jails over the previous 30 years. The report added that 31 Palestinians had died during interrogation as a result of physical torture while 15 had been deliberately killed during protests in prison. Another 6 had died during hunger strikes in the early 1990s while 21 had died owing to lack of medical care. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 February)

313. On 3 March, a report by Defence for Children International (DCI) charged that 21 Arab boys under 17 were being held at the Abu Kabir police lock-up in a state of vegetation. The report stated that the minors had absolutely nothing constructive, educational or positive to do, spent all day in bed and had nobody to talk to. In addition, their cells were not heated and they were not allowed visits. In answering the charges, the Tel Aviv police spokeswoman stated that the Abu Kabir lock-up was not of a design that would accommodate the rights of the detainees and suggested that they should be placed under the care of the Prisons Service. The Director of DCI, Dr. Philip Veerman, argued in response that the situation was not much better in the Prisons Service facilities. He stated that the fact that minors were being held in cells for 23 hours a day, was inhuman and degrading punishment, and that maintaining a facility for juveniles which provided absolutely nothing except food and medical care was shameful. (Jerusalem Post, 3 March)

314. On 3 March, the Centre for the Defence of the Individual (CDI) withdrew an appeal it had filed with the High Court of Justice on the previous day requesting that it order GSS to allow a Palestinian security detainee to meet with a lawyer. In the appeal, lawyer André Rosenthal claimed that banning detainees from meeting a lawyer had become an integral part of GSS interrogation methods and infringed on the detainees' rights. The petition was withdrawn by CDI after GSS had agreed to allow the detainee to meet a lawyer. The detainee, from the Shati refugee camp (Gaza Strip), was said to have been interrogated for a month in Shikma Prison. The CDI representative expressed fears that GSS was employing illegal interrogation methods against the detainee who had three times been issued with orders prohibiting him from meeting a lawyer. (Ha'aretz, 4 March)

315. On 14 March, it was reported that, according to the International Association for the Rights of the Child, detention conditions at the Russian Compound lock-up were even worse than those at the Abu Kabir detention facility. According to the Association, minors held in the Russian Compound had nothing to do and were bored. The report noted that the lack of occupation led the youths to commit violent acts and that minors who were under interrogation by GSS were not permitted to receive family visits or meet a probation officer. It added that minors complained that they were given little time to play, watch television or stay in the courtyard. Other complaints concerned the lack of hot water, lack of heating in the cells and extremely bad food. The report observed that the inadequate detention conditions of minors at the facility constituted a violation of the international Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Israel had signed. (Ha'aretz, 14 March)

316. On 14 March, it was reported that Israel's policy of administrative detention had gained new impetus. A detailed report by the Bethlehem-based human rights organization, the Society of St. Yves, stated that there were at present 250 administrative detainees, 230 of whom were in Megiddo Prison while 20 were in the Ashkelon Prison. Many suffered from various illnesses. The report noted that the detention of 90 Palestinians had been renewed at least three times and that 20 detainees had been under arrest for over three years, while four had spent five years in prison and are still not free. According to the report, Israel had renewed the administrative detention of 37 Palestinians who had been slated for release during the month of February. Of 48 detainees, only 11 had been released. The remainder had had their detention renewed for the seventh consecutive time. The report added that while 11 detainees had been released, 12 had been placed under administrative detention in February. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

317. On 15 March, the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Information appealed to international legal organizations and the United Nations Children's Fund for the immediate release of 250 minors held in Israeli prisons. (The Jerusalem Times, 21 March)

318. On 19 March, four soldiers and nine Palestinian security prisoners suffered from smoke inhalation during violent riots at the Megiddo Prison. There were also disturbances by hundreds of security prisoners at Nafa Prison near Beersheva but no injuries were reported. The riots apparently erupted in protest against the extension of administrative detention orders of some of the prisoners. The disturbances at both prisons were brought under control by the guards. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 20 March)

319. On 19 March, it was reported that the Al Haq human rights organization had called for the investigation of an incident in which excessive force was used against prisoners in Megiddo Prison. The incident occurred after a group of detainees burned a wooden prison cot to protest against a decision to renew the detention of four persons one day before they were due to be released. Tear gas, sound bombs, rubber bullets and hot water were used against the detainees. The clashes lasted for almost seven hours. The Al Haq statement noted that the injured, who were transferred to the prison clinic, were verbally abused and severely beaten by both the soldiers and medical personnel who sent them back to their cells with additional injuries. (The Jerusalem Times, 28 March)

320. On 24 March, it was reported that, according to the Association of Physicians for Human Rights, the detention conditions at Sharon Prison were shameful, endangered the detainees' health and did not meet minimal United Nations standards for the treatment of detainees. In a recently published report, the Association claimed that medical treatment at the prison was lacking and that overcrowding increased the risk of propagation of infectious diseases. The Association found that only one doctor visited the three detention facilities in the Sharon district. As a result, detainees were not examined before their imprisonment unless they were interrogated by GSS. Overcrowding in the cells constituted a fertile ground for infectious diseases such as viral jaundice, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and tuberculosis. The report charged that there was no psychiatrist to treat detainees threatening to commit suicide. Finally, the report stated that detainees complained of bad food, loss of weight and rejection of their requests for medical treatment. Other complaints concerned threats, beating and sexual abuse by other detainees. (Ha'aretz, 24 March)

321. On 26 March, it was reported that a resident of the Gaza Strip detained by GSS on suspicion of involvement in "terrorist" activities by the Islamic Jihad was staging a hunger strike to protest against his interrogation by collaborators. The detainee claimed that he had been placed in a cell with two collaborators who had interrogated him for two days. In an appeal filed with the High Court of Justice on behalf of the detainee, the Centre for the Defence of the Individual requested that GSS be prohibited from conducting such interrogations. It also requested the Court to issue an interim injunction, pending a final deliberation on the appeal, ordering GSS to immediately transfer the detainee to another cell in which there were collaborators. Finally, the Court was requested to urgently set a date for the hearing of the detainee. (Ha'aretz, 26 March)

322. On 30 March, five Palestinian residents of the territories appealed to the High Court of Justice, through the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, to order the authorities to allow them to enter Israel in order to visit their detained relatives. Their lawyers claimed that the sweeping policy adopted by Israel in 1996, under which every Palestinian wishing to visit detainees in Israel needed a special permit issued according to strict criteria for each visit, unjustifiably harmed the families of detainees. One of the petitioners, a nurse from a village in the Ramallah area whose husband had been jailed for six months pending his sentence, stated that her request for herself and her three children to enter Israel had been rejected on security grounds. According to the woman, the long separation from their father was a source of great pain to her children. Two other female petitioners also complained about the effect that the policy had had on their children. One woman, whose husband had been jailed for five years, told in the affidavit to the High Court of Justice how her daughter had to travel alone to Israel since she herself was not allowed to enter the country. Another petitioner, a 64-year-old paediatrician who had worked for UNRWA in the West Bank for many years and whose son had been under administrative detention for one-and-a-half years, had had all but one of his applications rejected, also on security grounds. The fifth petitioner was a 65-year-old woman from Bethlehem who had been prevented from visiting her son in Megiddo Prison for the previous six months. (Ha'aretz, 30 March)

323. On 6 April, the Public Committee Against Torture petitioned the High Court of Justice to issue an interim injunction ordering a halt to the interrogation of a 24-year-old suspected Islamic Jihad activist who had tried to commit suicide while in solitary confinement at the Russian Compound in Jerusalem. The Palestinian, who had attempted suicide after being interrogated by GSS for some six weeks, had been arrested on 18 August 1996 and held in the Megiddo detention facility. His arrest was to end on 17 February but he was instead transferred to the Russian Compound for a GSS interrogation. In an affidavit submitted to the Court, the detainee stated that during the first phase of his interrogation, he had been placed on a small chair with his hands tied behind his back while his interrogators had played loud music. At that stage, he had confessed to providing services to the Islamic Jihad, including transferring money to the families of detainees and sending an envoy to Amman to make contact with the Islamic Jihad. The detainee stated that, after his confession, he was placed in solitary confinement and asked to confess to other charges. When he told the interrogators that he did not have any other information, they started to ill-treat him, kicking him and forcing him to perform painful exercises. The detainee told a hospital psychiatrist that he was under mental pressure because the interrogators had tried to force him to confess to things he had not done. (Ha'aretz, 7 April)

324. On 9 April, a 16-year-old Arab youth suffering from serious behavioural disorders appealed to the High Court of Justice against his detention at the Kishon detention facility. The appeal, which was filed through the International Organization for the Rights of the Child, claimed that the youth needed treatment and that his detention, which had been going on for nine months, could harm him. The appeal also claimed that the youth was detained without the appropriate orders. (Ha'aretz, 10 April)

325. On 16 April, the High Court of Justice rejected a petition by a detained Hamas "terrorist" against the use by the General Security Service of shaking and force to elicit his confession during interrogation. The Court accepted the State's petition that GSS interrogators were entitled to employ special methods if state security and human lives were at stake. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 17 April)

326. On 17 April, fierce clashes broke out in Nafha Prison in the Negev after 140 prisoners had been poisoned by the food they were served on the eve of the Id al-Adha holiday. The prison authorities had called in the prison police who invaded the cells, using tear gas. Ten prisoners suffered from tear gas inhalation. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

327. On 27 April, it was reported that two residents of Tsurif village had appealed to the High Court of Justice to prohibit GSS from torturing them. They also asked the Court to issue an interim order banning the use of violent methods of interrogation, pending a deliberation on their appeals. The detainees, who had been arrested on 10 April, claimed through their lawyer, André Rosenthal from the Centre for the Protection of the Individual, that they were placed in painful positions called "shabah" (i.e., seated on a small stool with their arms tied behind their backs, their legs tied and a sack over their heads while loud music was played incessantly). In addition, they were placed against the wall with their hands tied behind their backs and subjected to sleep

deprivation for entire days and nights. Dr. Al-Kadi, the head of the Ahli Hospital in Hebron and one of the detainees claimed that his interrogators had threatened to break his teeth and castrate him. In addition, he was given only five minutes to eat and go to the toilet and was prevented from praying. He also claimed that his hands and legs were swollen as a result of the excessively tight shackles. The other detainee charged in his appeal that he had been arrested after rejecting a demand by a GSS interrogator that he collaborate with the authorities. According to the detainee, he had been already interrogated for the same reasons the previous summer and had subsequently been released. (Ha'aretz, 27 April)

E. Annexation and settlement

328. On 1 January, the Civil Administration in the West Bank blocked a two-kilometre road which was paved "illegally" by the Kalkilya Municipality in order to link the town to the Habla junction. The Civil Administration spokesman warned that any violation of construction laws would be dealt with harshly. (Ha'aretz, 3 January)

329. On 2 January, four residents of the Beit Surik village (Ramallah area) were arrested by IDF troops after they had tried to physically prevent bulldozers from carrying out ground-levelling work for the expansion of the Har Adar settlement. The four residents claimed that they were the legal owners of the land. After their arrest, bulldozers continued the ground-levelling work, including the uprooting of olive trees under the protection of IDF. According to the Palestinian residents, the expansion of the Har Adar settlement was carried out on hundreds of dunums of land belonging to the residents of the Katana, Beit Surik and Biddu villages. Civil Administration sources argued in response that the work was carried out on state-owned land. (Ha'aretz, 3 January)

330. On 5 January, the residents of the Beit El settlement removed seven mobile homes they had placed on Har Atris on 3 January 1997, in exchange for a meeting with Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to discuss their demands to expand their settlement. After the meeting, Mr. Mordechai told the press that the needs of the settlers would be discussed seriously and that answers would be forthcoming. Settlement leaders disclosed that Mr. Mordechai verbally promised to expand the settlement on land currently being occupied by the adjacent IDF base and to establish a permanent IDF presence on Har Atris. (Ha'aretz, 5 and 6 January; Jerusalem Post, 6 January)

331. On 7 January, dozens of Bedouin from the Jahalin tribe, from some 45 families, protested against a court order for their eviction from their tent camps near the Maaleh Adumim settlement. The 50 demonstrators, including about a dozen children, stood along the Jerusalem-Jericho highway carrying signs reading "The world should see the plight of the Jahalin" and "The court decision is racist". In August, the High Court of Justice ruled that the Jahalin had to leave the area where they had been living for several decades. The Court stated that each family would be offered a plot near Abu Dis, on the outskirts of Jerusalem. The Jahalin tribe rejected the offer, stating that the land they were being offered was located near a garbage dump. Israeli Arab Taleb a-Sanaa,

a member of the Knesset, whose ancestors were Bedouin and who joined the protest, stated that Israel had no right to uproot the Jahalin. "They cannot bury people alive", he said. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 8 January)

332. On 8 January, a dispute between the Beqaot and Roi settlements and Palestinian residents broke out when a number of settlers began tilling a 2,000-dunum plot of land in the Jordan Valley, which Palestinians claimed was theirs. The police intervened and the settlers agreed to stop work until 12 January in order to give the Palestinians a chance to prove their ownership claims. This was the second land dispute in the Jordan Valley in a month, the other being the so-called Yugoslav Experimental Farm near moshav Masua. Israel claimed that the 400-dunum plot belonged to the moshav, while the Palestinians maintained that the land belonged to them under the terms of the Oslo accords. (Jerusalem Post, 9 January)

333. On 9 January, settlers from Hebron laid the foundations for a new residential building in the settlement's Avraham Avinu quarter. The settlement spokesman stated that the construction was meant to show that the settlers were planning to stay in Hebron, develop their community and bring in more people. He stated that the settlement had all the permits needed to begin the construction of the building, which was to comprise 10 apartments. In another development, yeshiva students moved into a building in Jerusalem's Christian Quarter that a European Jew had bought some six months earlier from a Christian Arab living abroad. (Jerusalem Post, 9 and 10 January)

334. On 10 January, it was reported that a group of 200 Jewish fanatics had set up seven mobile homes on land known as Tel Igritis, in the Ramallah area. The move was a prelude to the intended expansion of the Beit El settlement, which settlers had vowed to expand after the killing of two settlers in November 1996. Israeli military intervention forced the settlers to remove the mobile homes and leave the hill. Reports, however, indicated that the settlers had agreed to leave only after the Minister of Defence, Yitzhak Mordechai, had promised to consider their demands for the expansion of Beit El. After the killing of the Beit El settlers, Israel decided to grant to the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza "special development area grade A status", which meant that they would be eligible for grants and other Government aid to assist in their development. (The Jerusalem Times, 10 January)

335. On 14 January, several dozen Palestinian residents from the Tulkarm area staged a demonstration near the A-Ras village in order to prevent Israeli land surveyors from carrying out work in an area designated by the Civil Administration for quarries. The demonstrators, headed by the Tulkarm Governor Az A-Din A-Sharif and Palestinian Legislative Council member Dr. Hasan Harisha, vowed to protect their land at the cost of their lives. The Israeli Defence Forces prevented other demonstrators from joining the protest which followed an incident on 12 January in which an Israeli bulldozer had demolished a stone fence protecting a plot of land owned by a resident of Tulkarm and destroyed several dunums of land planted with olives, apples and beans. Answering the accusations of the residents, the Civil Administration stated that the land in question was state-owned. The Tulkarm Governor claimed, however, that of the 10,000 dunums in the area designated for quarries, only some 150 dunums were state-owned. The rest was private land owned by Palestinian families or

villages in the area. Palestinian Authority representatives stated that the concentration of quarries in the area would seriously affect the environment, deprive Tulkarm of its last remaining land in the south-east, and harm agriculture, the villagers' principal source of livelihood. (Ha'aretz, 15 January)

336. On 14 January, the Civil Administration, aided by hundreds of policemen, evacuated a Bedouin family from the Jahalin tribe in order to allow for the expansion of the Maaleh Adumim settlement. The operation was timed to be carried out when only one woman and three children were at the encampment. The family's belongings, including their sheep and goats, were loaded onto trucks, after which Civil Administration bulldozers destroyed their tin shacks and the two pens for the animals. Later in the day, several dozen Bedouin from a nearby encampment who were not present at the site during the eviction arrived at the scene to protest. They were pushed away by the police who declared the area a closed military zone. Some Bedouin lay on the ground and refused to move but were dragged away by the police. The evicted family was given a permanent plot of land some 500 metres away from the Abu Dis garbage dump and was given a shipping container to live in. The family stated that it could not live in a container without windows and pitched its tent down the hill. The lawyer representing the family stated that the alternative site was rocky, windy and unfit for human habitation. Gush Shalom issued a declaration stating that the Jahalin tribe, which had lived on the site for decades before the establishment of the Maaleh Adumim settlement, had fallen victim to what it described as the unbridled lust for settlements which destroyed any chance for peace and disinherited the poor. (Ha'aretz, 15 January)

337. On 14 January, the National and Islamic Anti-Settlement Committee organized a protest against an Israeli plan to confiscate the Wadi A-Teen Valley. Tens of thousands of dunums of land were targeted for seizure, affecting the income of six villages. Two days previously, Israeli bulldozers uprooted some 500 olive trees in the area lying between Khirbet Jabara and the village of Ras, located off Tulkarm. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 January)

338. On 18 January, the Israeli authorities stopped Palestinian farmers, who were backed by Israeli peace activists, from planting olive tree saplings on the land belonging to the villages of Deir Qiddis and Kharbatha in the Ramallah area. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

339. On 20 January, the Maaleh Ephraim settlement received the final permission to build some 60 new housing units, its first approval of construction in six years. The 60 housing units were reportedly part of a project to built 470 units in the 1700-strong settlement in the Jordan Valley. The head of the Maaleh Ephraim Local Council welcomed the decision, stating that it proved that the Government was not all talk, but action as well. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 January)

340. On 22 January, an advertisement sponsored by the Housing Ministry appeared in a number of newspapers offering some 1,500 housing units in the territories, the sale of which had been frozen under the previous Government. Almost 1,500 out of the 3,000 housing units had been sold since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had assumed office. Settlement leaders stated that the

remainder had not been sold because potential buyers were waiting for the implementation of the Government's decision to give settlements "development area A" status. The leaders believed that the Housing Ministry's decision to market the remaining homes heralded the imminent granting of the "development area A" status. (Jerusalem Post, 23 January)

341. On 23 January, border policemen detained for interrogation several Palestinian labourers who had been restoring Arab-owned homes in an area of Hebron under Israeli control. (Ha'aretz, 24 January)

342. On 24 January, it was reported that Palestinian sources were concerned about growing settlement activity around the city of Nablus, the Jordan Valley in the east, Wadi A-Teen near Tulkarm in the west, and Kharbatha in the centre, south-west of Ramallah. A researcher for the group Solidarity International for Human Rights explained that the most recent settlement activity was a consequence of the US$ 1 billion which the Netanyahu Government had allocated for the revival of the settlement movement. (The Jerusalem Times, 24 January)

343. On 26 January, the Civil Administration in the West Bank and IDF uprooted between 600 and 800 olive saplings in two villages in the Jenin area. During the operation, clashes broke out between the residents and soldiers, and four residents were arrested. The saplings reportedly had been planted in the villages a short time before as part of a campaign by the Palestinian Authority and the Land Protection Committees aimed at strengthening the Palestinian rural areas, especially those threatened by settlements. Reports of similar uprooting operations were published every week in the Palestinian media. The Civil Administration stated that the uprooting was carried out on state-owned land only. (Ha'aretz, 27 January)

344. On 26 January, the Interministerial Committee on Jerusalem Affairs earmarked an additional NIS 130 million for the budget of the Jerusalem Municipality as part of a plan to strengthen Israel's sovereignty in the eastern part of the city. The funds would be used to improve the road infrastructure, the water system, set up a new police station and deploy an additional 400 policemen in East Jerusalem. The Committee's decision was reportedly the first to be taken since the change of Government. (Ha'aretz, 27 January)

345. On 27 January, some 200 police and border police evacuated five Bedouin families, numbering some 30 persons, from the vicinity of the Maaleh Adumim settlement in the second stage of the evacuation of the Jahalin tribe from the area. A number of Bedouin from nearby encampments joined the families at the site and the men put up mostly passive resistance. At least one man was forcibly dragged down a hill and five people were reportedly injured. Lawyer Lynda Brayer, who waged what turned out to be a fruitless court battle on behalf of the Jahalin, stood to the side and said "I tell the families not to be depressed, that the only way the Israelis can do this is through brute force. They don't have justice or right on their side". Uzi Zerahiya, the head of the Bethlehem regional office of the Coordinator of the Government's Activities in the Territories stated that the Bedouin were being removed in stages in the hope that they would see that the Civil Administration was intent on carrying out the High Court's decision to move the tribe and would therefore choose to leave on their own. The new site allotted to the Jahalin was reportedly located

500 metres away from Jerusalem's largest garbage dump and therefore unfit for human habitation, according to environmental studies. Sarah Kaminker, a former Jerusalem municipal town planner who identified with the Meretz party, observed that the Environment Ministry itself had rules stating that "no human settlement should be put up closer than two kilometres from a garbage dump". She continued to state that even if the site were environmentally safe, it had to be terraced so that the Bedouin could put up their tents on a flat surface. Mrs. Kaminker concluded by stating that half a dunum of land was not enough for one family. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 28 January)

346. On 27 January, the Hebron Municipal Council condemned the decision of IDF forbidding Arab construction in the casbah area and called for an emergency meeting to confront what it described as a serious violation of the Hebron agreement. In a lengthy order written in Hebrew to which several maps were attached, the OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan prohibited Palestinians from carrying out construction or renovation work in the areas indicated on the maps. The purpose of the ban was to prevent any building that might pose a threat to the town's Jewish settlement. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 28 January)

347. On 29 January, the Palestinian Legislative Council, meeting for the first time, in Hebron, told the Hebron Municipality to ignore the order by IDF which prohibited construction in the casbah area. Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natshe charged that the ban was a plot against the people of the Old City. He stated that 122 buildings, some of which had been demolished by army bulldozers, were affected by the ban, while Israelis were renovating the yeshiva school near Beit Romano. The Palestinian Legislative Council also expressed its concern over Israeli plans to link the Maaleh Adumim settlement located east of Jerusalem, to the Neve Yaacov settlement. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 30 January)

348. On 29 January, it was reported that the Interministerial Committee on Settlements had included an additional 84 settlements, including the settlement in Hebron, in the list of settlements classified as being of national priorities A and B. The settlements would enjoy advantageous conditions in the fields of housing, education, employment, taxation and welfare. Among the settlements added to the top national priority list were: Emmanuel, Kiryat Arba and numerous settlements located in the areas under the jurisdiction of the local councils of Har Hebron, Mate Binyamin, Samaria and Gush Etzion. The settlements included in the national priority B list (which meant that they would benefit from less financial aid) were Efrat, Ariel, Barkan, Mitzpeh Yericho, Ofra and Alon Shvut. A total of 123 settlements beyond the Green Line currently figured on the new national priority map, as opposed to the current 39. The Government was expected to approve the Committee's decision during the ensuing days. (Ha'aretz, 29 January)

349. On 6 February, it was reported that the 1997 building programme of the Construction and Housing Ministry included the sale of land for 4,553 housing units in settlements in Judea and Samaria (West Bank). Among the proposals was the sale of land for 300 units in Emmanuel (as part of a longer-term scheme to construct 1,159 homes in that religious settlement), 200 units in the Givat Zayit area of Efrat (as part of a broader plan to build 1,122 housing units in the settlement), 779 units in Ariel, 500 in Alfei Menasheh, 462 in Ofarim and 381 at two sites in Karnei Shomron. Although the programme was said to still be

in its initial stages, Ministry officials expressed the hope that Construction and Housing Minister Meir Porush would soon give his formal approval. (Jerusalem Post, 6 February)

350. On 9 February, a Peace Now follow-up panel on settlements charged that villas in settlements in the territories were being sold at extremely low prices, starting from NIS 35,000, with purchasers receiving bonuses totalling up to 95 per cent of their value. In some settlements such as Harmes, plots were given to every applicant free of charge as part of "build-your-home" schemes. Peace Now also indicated that construction was continuing in several settlements without appropriate permits. Referring to the panel's report, the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria (West Bank) and Gaza explained that the current Government, unlike the former one, had decided on a certain agenda, which was different from that of the former Government, and was trying to minimize the amount of land that would be handed over to the Palestinian Authority. One of the ways to achieve that objective, the Council noted, was to build settlements in Judea and Samaria (West Bank). (Ha'aretz, 10 February)

351. On 11 February, it was reported that Knesset members from the Third Way and the National Religious Party had threatened to disrupt the work of the Government or even topple it, unless Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu acted on various construction projects in Jerusalem. Emanuel Zissman (Third Way), one of the most outspoken members on the issue, stated that the strengthening of Jerusalem was an essential part of his party's platform. The Third Way reportedly called for 1,500 housing units and 3,000 hotel rooms to be built in the area between the Maaleh Adumim settlement and Jerusalem, in addition to roads and the start of the Har Homa project. (Jerusalem Post, 11 February)

352. On 11 February, 10 Palestinians were slightly injured during clashes with IDF troops in the Tulkarm area. The clashes occurred when dozens of residents of villages in the area tried to prevent Civil Administration land surveyors from carrying out surveys near the A-Ras village. The clashes broke out a day after the Civil Administration had notified the Tulkarm Governor of a plan to turn the A-Ras area into a quarry site. The Palestinians claimed that quarries would have a negative impact on the environment and on their livelihood. (Ha'aretz, 12 February)

353. On 11 February, the Civil Administration evicted most of the Jahalin tribe from the Maaleh Adumim area where they had lived since the 1950s and transferred them to a new site near the Abu-Dis garbage dump. The police resorted to force when several Bedouin offered passive resistance. Five Bedouin were arrested while nine were slightly injured and needed medical treatment. The eviction operation was the largest one to date. Three small encampments were left at the site but were expected to be cleared as well. Some eight families lived in the area, which was in the first stage cleared to allow for the ongoing construction of a neighbourhood of villas. Hundreds of police surrounded the tribe's encampments, declaring the area a closed military zone and giving the Bedouin two minutes to vacate it. Several dozen men lay on the ground holding hands but were dragged away by the police while military policewomen entered tents and tin shacks and forced out the women and children. Several minutes later, foreign workers loaded the residents' possessions onto trucks, after which three bulldozers entered the site and tore down the tribe's tents and shacks. The

last Bedouin to be evicted was a 95-year-old man who was carried out on a stretcher as his wife was crying out in despair at the policemen. Later in the day, 16 other families were evicted from another site at the entrance to the Maaleh Adumim settlement. Some 160 Bedouin, including 10 left-wing activists, lay on the ground refusing to be evicted but were dragged away by the police and forcibly put on a bus. Several Bedouin were injured during the confrontation. After the eviction, bulldozers entered the site and tore down the tribe's tin shacks to a chorus of cheers by school children from the Maaleh Adumim settlement. (Ha'aretz, 12 February)

354. On 12 February, it was reported that a week before, the Civil Administration had evicted two Bedouin families from the Jordan Valley to southern Har Hebron. The Civil Administration spokesman stated that the eviction from the Jordan Valley had been carried out as part of the Civil Administration's ongoing eviction of residents from fire practice areas. (Ha'aretz, 12 February)

355. On 13 February, Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled declared that his Tsomet party would leave the Coalition unless the Government went ahead with plans to build Jewish homes in East Jerusalem. (Jerusalem Post, 14 February)

356. On 13 February, hundreds of residents from the Tulkarm area clashed for the third consecutive day with IDF soldiers who had been deployed in the region to enable Israeli land surveyors to carry out their work. The residents protested against a plan to dig six quarries in the area. IDF soldiers responded by beating the protesters with the butts of their guns and separated them from the surveyors who continued with their work. Two protestors were injured and needed medical treatment, while two soldiers were slightly injured during the confrontation. It was reported that an ambulance could not reach the scene of the clashes because of IDF roadblocks. In another development, bulldozers started ground-levelling work for the construction of a new road to the Elkanah settlement. (Ha'aretz, 14 February)

357. On 14 February, some two hundred persons, including three members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Governor of Tulkarm and a Peace Now delegation, staged a demonstration against the building of quarries by Israeli companies in the Wadi A-Tin, south-east of Tulkarm. Dr. Harishe, a member of the Legislative Council, stated that the quarries proved the racist policy of Israel which did not hesitate to damage the health of Palestinians. "We will not allow the creation of quarries that will affect the future of the villages, their residents and the health of our children", he warned. The Tulkarm Governor, Mr. A-Sharif, underlined in his speech that the quarries would affect the development possibilities of Tulkarm whose only reserves of free land lay in the south-east. (Ha'aretz, 16 February)

358. On 18 February, the Ministerial Committee on Jerusalem decided to proceed with the construction of two roads in East Jerusalem and the surrounding area. The Committee voted to advance the construction of Highway 45 and Highway 4. Highway 45 already extended from the Modi'in area eastward, along Beit Horon, and towards the Givat Ze'ev settlement. It would now be extended to the Neve Yaacov settlement before turning south-east towards the Maaleh Adumim settlement. The Committee also voted to accelerate plans for the construction

of the Eastern Ring Road in Jerusalem, including the Mount Scopus road. Finally, the Committee pledged to advance the planning of Highway 80, with top priority being given to the stretch from Tel Arad to the Mishor Adumim settlement. In another development, Peace Now sent a letter to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu protesting plans to extend the Bethlehem bypass road which had been opened in September. The movement stated that widening the road would only worsen the strained relations between Israelis and Palestinians and hamper the peace talks. (Jerusalem Post, 20 February)

359. On 19 February, the Civil Administration completed the eviction of the 300 members of the Jahalin tribe from the Maaleh Adumim area to a permanent site on a hill next to the Abu Dis garbage dump. Some 12 families, numbering some 100 Bedouin, were evicted during the operation. Hundreds of police from Judea and Samaria (West Bank) evicted the Bedouin who put up passive resistance. Foreign workers cleared the residents' possessions and bulldozers tore down their tents and tin shacks. (Ha'aretz, 20 February)

360. On 19 February, the Defence Ministry rejected claims that new settlements were being built in Judea and Samaria (West Bank). The Ministry's statement came in response to a report which appeared in the Ma'ariv daily newspaper whereby Kfar Oranim, near the Lapid settlement, was the first new settlement to be built in Judea and Samaria (West Bank) since 1992. The article described Kfar Oranim, situated on a hilltop west of Lapid, as a new settlement with 50 villas waiting to be inhabited. The report also listed some 60 other settlements where houses and apartments were being built, suggesting that a building boom was under way in Judea and Samaria (West Bank). (Jerusalem Post, 20 February)

361. On 25 February, hundreds of Palestinians protested at Har Homa against the Government's plans to build a Jewish settlement on the site located between two Arab villages in south-eastern Jerusalem. Some protesters waved signs reading "Jabal Abu Ghneim will not become Har Homa". The animosity towards the project was aggravated further by the Palestinian perception that Israel was seeking to reduce the Arab population of the city by confiscating the Jerusalem identity cards of any Palestinian who had acquired foreign citizenship or moved outside Jerusalem municipal boundaries. Feisal Husseini, the Palestinian Authority's official in charge of Jerusalem Affairs, accused the Government of attempting to cut off East Jerusalem from the West Bank and separate its residents from their institutions in order to Judaize the city. He added that the Government worked on the expulsion of residents of East Jerusalem by creating housing shortages and then confiscating the residents' identity cards on the grounds that they did not live in the city any more. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 26 February)

362. On 26 February, the Ministerial Committee on Jerusalem headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu unanimously approved the construction of some 2,500 housing units for Jews in the Har Homa area of south-eastern Jerusalem despite sweeping opposition by Palestinians and the Arab world. The project was expected to increase Jerusalem's settler population by some 25,000 persons. Following the decision, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated that the Palestinians and the whole world had to understand that since the change of Government, there had been a change in Israel's approach regarding Jerusalem and that Israel would refuse to return to the 1967 borders or agree to the creation

of a Palestinian state. Finally, Mr. Netanyahu warned that should violence break out again, Israel would not continue with the peace process. (Ha'aretz, 26 and 27 February; Jerusalem Post, 26 February)

363. On 26 February, it was reported that yeshiva students from the military preparatory college at the Eli settlement had taken over a hilltop in Samaria as a first step towards turning it into a settlement. The move was reportedly part of a Defence Ministry plan for national endeavours aimed at instilling motivation in the Israeli youth. According to the Defence Ministry, the nationalistic plan was aimed at encouraging youth to take part in national and security missions and strengthening their appreciation of settlement. (Jerusalem Post, 26 February)

364. On 26 February, some 1,000 Palestinians from the Tulkarm area responded to a call by the Palestinian Land Protection Committees and took part in demonstrations against the digging of quarries south-east of Tulkarm. The Israeli Defence Force did not prevent the protestors from reaching the area since it was not declared a closed military zone, as had been the case on previous occasions. The Palestinians claimed that the quarries would cause considerable environmental damage, harm the economy of the nearby villages and block the development of Tulkarm. The Civil Administration and the army argued in response that Israel had the right to turn area C into a quarry. In addition, Israel claimed that quarries complied with the criteria of minimal environmental damage. (Ha'aretz, 27 February)

365. On 27 February, some 1,500 demonstrators took part in a protest march against the construction of the Har Homa settlement in East Jerusalem. The demonstrators set out from the Beit Sahur Town Hall to Jabal Abu Ghneim, where the settlement was to be built. Among the participants were Palestinians whose land had been confiscated to allow for the planned construction, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council from the Bethlehem area and Fatah activists, as well as members of various organizations from Bethlehem and Beit Sahur. In a related development, Hamas issued a statement warning Israel that construction in Har Homa would lead to an outbreak of violence and the end of many months of calm. (Ha'aretz, 28 February)

366. On 28 February, IDF soldiers and police forced some 150 Palestinians to leave the area of the so-called Yugoslav Experimental Farm in the Jordan Valley. The area had been the scene of several clashes in the past. Shortly before the Hebron redeployment, IDF declared the farm a closed military zone. Palestinians claimed that the land belonged to them under the Oslo accords which stipulated that all experimental farms in the territories would be handed over to the Palestinians. Israel maintained, however, that the area had ceased to be an experimental farm in 1988, when it was turned over to the World Zionist Organization's settlement division. In 1994, the farm became part of moshav Masua. (Jerusalem Post, 2 March)

367. On 3 March, it was reported that Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai had recently allowed the drawing up of a master plan concerning 10,000 dunums of land, the aim of which was to link the Maaleh Adumim settlement to Jerusalem, and which was to be submitted to the Judea and Samaria (West Bank) Higher

Planning Committee. The plan envisaged the construction of 1,500 housing units and 3,000 hotel rooms between the settlement and Jerusalem. (Ha'aretz, 3 March)

368. On 4 March, it was reported that the Jordan Valley Regional Council was in the midst of a campaign to encourage the Israeli population to settle in the region. Launched under the slogan "The Jordan Valley - a strip of opportunities", the campaign proposed that 259 new houses be built in six to eight settlements during 1997, in addition to the 50 houses that had already been built and were ready for rental or sale. An additional 359 houses were said to still be in the planning stages, pending approval. Future residents were expected to receive grants and loans to cover most of the cost, predicted to be around NIS 207,000 for a 130-square-metre house on a half-dunum plot of land. In addition, the campaign included plans for the building of a 2,000-dunum industrial site, in cooperation with the Maaleh Ephraim settlement. The campaign announced further that the Judea and Samaria College in the Ariel settlement would open a local branch in Maaleh Ephraim in October. Other approved plans concerned the development of a beach north of the Dead Sea and the construction of five hotels. The head of the Jordan Valley Regional Council stated that the Government had already approved an additional NIS 168 million for the region for 1997. (Jerusalem Post, 4 March)

369. On 4 March, it was reported that the budget of religious colleges, most of which were located in the territories, would be increased 14 times, reaching a total of NIS 6 million. (Ha'aretz, 4 March)

370. On 7 March, some 2,000 protesters marched towards Har Homa. The marchers, who had started out from a school in Beit Sahur, shouted slogans including "Shame on Netanyahu" but were stopped by a line of soldiers and policemen on a hilltop opposite Har Homa. Marwan Barghouti, the head of the Fatah in the West Bank and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, stated that the turnout was relatively low because 23 buses had been stopped at roadblocks north of Jerusalem. Faisal Husseini, who called on the protesters not to clash with the soldiers, expressed the hope that Israel would reverse its decision to build at Jabal Abu Ghneim, stop confiscating identity cards in East Jerusalem, stop demolishing Palestinian homes and stop isolating the West Bank from the Gaza Strip. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 9 March)

371. On 9 March, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai visited the Karmi Tzur settlement and assured its residents that the 1.5-kilometre road leading to the settlement would remain in area C, which was under exclusive Israeli control. (Jerusalem Post, 11 March)

372. On 9 March, a meeting of all Palestinian political groups in Gaza established a joint PLO-Islamic committee to resist Israel's policy of settlement and land expropriation. The meeting was arranged by the Islamic Committee Against Settlements, one of the four offices ordered closed in Jerusalem, as well as the Palestinian Authority. (Jerusalem Post, 10 March)

373. On 10 March, about 100 Palestinians clashed with 150 soldiers in Hebron during an incident in which the Palestinians tried to stop bulldozers from clearing the way for a new road that would connect the Kiryat Arba settlement to the Israeli-controlled part of Hebron. The soldiers used force against men,

women and children, injuring 12 people with clubs and rifle butts. At least five Palestinians were detained. Palestinians stated that the clashes erupted when Israeli bulldozers began ploughing through their vineyards and almond and olive groves. The Israeli Defence Forces declared the area a closed military zone. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 11 March)

374. On 10 March, five Bedouin families were ordered to leave the Hima area in the northern Jordan Valley. The families refused to comply with the order of the Civil Administrator who did not hand them a written eviction notice but only notified them orally. The families live a few hundred metres away from Mehola, the first settlement built by Israel after the June 1967 War. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

375. On 11 March, a group of Palestinians managed to halt excavation on Givat Hazayit on the outskirts of the Efrat settlement. The incident reportedly occurred when 10 Palestinians arrived at the site and tried to stop two bulldozers, threatening to kill one of the workers. Police and IDF troops arrived on the scene, forced the Palestinians to leave the site and demanded that all work be stopped until they saw a copy of a court order authorizing the construction. According to one settler, 400 houses were slated for construction on the site and the project had received all the necessary authorizations and permits. He stated further that, in the past, Palestinians from the surrounding villages had petitioned the High Court claiming that settlers from Efrat were building on Palestinian land. All of their claims had, however, been rejected by the Court as false. In another development, bulldozers continued work on a security road in the western sector of the Kiryat Arba settlement. The Palestinian Authority claimed that the bulldozers were tearing down vineyards, and almond and olive groves. The area was declared a closed military zone on 10 March after 150 Palestinians rioted there and clashed with IDF soldiers in an attempt to stop bulldozers from clearing the way for the security road. (Jerusalem Post, 12 March)

376. On 14 March, it was reported that, for the third consecutive day, Israeli bulldozers were levelling land east of Hebron in preparation for the building of a road that would link the Kiryat Arba settlement with the Old City of Hebron. Palestinians who lived between Kiryat Arba and the old part of Hebron expressed fear that the new settler road would create circumstances that would force them to leave their homes. In the meantime, landowners had reported extensive damage to their land which was mainly used for agricultural purposes. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

377. On 14 March, it was reported that Palestinian livestock owners who lived in the Jordan Valley, in the perimeter covering the hilly areas near Tubas, Tamous and Nassiryeh east of Nablus and down to Jericho in the south, had been handed eviction notices. The measure was perceived as part of an Israeli campaign to clear the area of its sparse Arab population and take control of water sources and of the plains for the purpose of settlement expansion. (The Jerusalem Times, 14 March)

378. On 17 March, at a press conference in Jerusalem, the Peace Now movement presented a periodic report covering changes in settlement trends since the Netanyahu Government came to office. According to the report, Defence Minister

Yitzhak Mordechai had issued construction permits for more than 4,000 housing units in Kiryat Sefer, Maaleh Adumim, the Jordan Valley and Emmanuel. In addition, 3,000 apartments, the sale of which had been frozen by the Rabin Government, had been placed on the market. The report also indicated that the number of settlers had increased from 137,000 at the beginning of 1996 to some 150,000 at the end of that year, representing a 9.4 per cent increase. The number of births in settlements over the same period was 4,661, which meant that the population increase of some 9,000 resulted from the arrival of new settlers. According to "Peace Now", however, the most significant change had been the large increase in the budgets allocated for settlements. (Ha'aretz, 18 March)

379. On 18 March, it was reported that since mid-February the Interior Ministry had been sending letters to hundreds of Palestinian holders of Israeli identity cards who lived outside the municipal borders of Jerusalem, notifying them that their right to reside in Jerusalem had been abolished. According to estimates of human rights organizations, the policy of confiscation of identity cards affected some 50,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites, most of whom lived in the West Bank. For Palestinians, the loss of the blue Israeli identity card meant the loss of their right to move freely within the Green Line, including East Jerusalem, the loss of their right to work and live in the City or to visit it, as well as their right to register their children as its residents. In a comment on the measure, Ingrid Jaradat, Director of the Residency Project at the Alternative Information Centre, stated that the Interior Minister had never declared that the West Bank was not part of the State of Israel and that Palestinians who moved there risked losing their identity cards. "Israel", she said, "wants to decide about the demographic situation in Jerusalem and reduce its Palestinian population before the final status negotiations". (Ha'aretz, 17 March)

380. On 18 March, amid a chorus of condemnation from the international community, construction finally began on Har Homa. A Housing Ministry spokesman, Moshe Eilat, announced that the first homes could be ready for habitation as early as 1999. The first stage included the construction of some 2,400 homes, with another 4,000 to be built in the next stage. In a statement to Palestine Radio, Yasser Arafat called on Palestinians not to commit violent acts and not to be dragged into them by Israel. Nevertheless, about 50 Palestinian youths hurled stones from Umm Tuba, at the edge of the construction site. They also burned tyres and blocked a road. A handful of youths also scuffled with troops at another nearby site. Massive security forces, including army helicopters circling overhead, were deployed throughout the area in case of disturbances by protesting Palestinians. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 19 March)

381. On 19 March, the High Court of Justice rejected two petitions for a halt to construction at Har Homa as earth-moving machinery continued excavations on the Jerusalem hilltop site. After hearing arguments that city planners had only considered the needs of the city's Jewish residents, however, the justices asked the Government to submit within 60 days an explanation of its planning decision. The petitions were filed on 4 March by 29 Palestinians from the Umm Tuba and Beit Sahur villages whose land had been confiscated in 1991 to allow for the construction of the Har Homa neighbourhood, as well as the by the Ir Shalem association. The petitioners claimed that about one third of the land in East Jerusalem - more than 23,000 dunums of some 70,000 - had been confiscated since

1967. All of the expropriations had been carried out in areas populated by Arabs and the vast majority of land was Arab-owned. More than 40,000 housing units had been constructed on the confiscated land, for the Jewish population only. Not one housing unit for the Arab population was built on the land. The petitioners also claimed that, of the total land of East Jerusalem (some 70.5 square kilometres), only some six square kilometres were subject to construction. In those areas, there were so many legal, economic and planning obstacles that in most cases the possibility of receiving a construction permit became purely theoretical. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 20 March)

382. On 19 March, five Jewish families moved into the City of David area in Jerusalem's Arab neighbourhood of Silwan. The families moved in accompanied by Knesset member Hanan Porat and a contingent of 10 private guards. According to the police, the move was legal and no action was expected to be taken against the families. The houses had been purchased from a private owner six months earlier by the Elad organization. According to the organization's spokesman, the move was part of the ongoing effort by Elad to settle the entire area where King David had once had his home at the time of the construction of the First Temple. The spokesman also indicated that the group would enter another house in the next three to four months. There were reportedly about 30 Jewish families, consisting of 70 people, who lived in the City of David, in addition to 30 yeshiva students who studied there during the day. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 21 March)

383. On 3 April, the Housing Ministry announced the relaunching of a campaign aimed at helping the buyers of new apartments in 110 settlements. As part of the campaign, the buyers entitled to the benefits would receive an additional mortgage, varying from NIS 10,000 to 50,000 per family. In a related development, an additional 84 settlements were officially defined as development areas A and B. (Ha'aretz, 4 April)

384. On 4 April, it was reported that Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai had approved construction plans for the settlements of Ganim and Shaarei Tikvah. The plans envisaged the construction of 310 housing units in Ganim (Jenin area) and 48 housing units in Shaarei Tikvah (located in the western part of the West Bank). (Ha'aretz, 4 April)

385. On 9 April, the B'tselem human rights organization, together with the Centre for the Defence of the Individual, issued a report accusing the Government of Israel of carrying out a quiet deportation of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem. "By means of laws, regulations, verdicts and administrative stratagem", the report charged, "thousands of Palestinians are expelled from their homes. They are obliged to give up their social rights, abandon their families and start their lives elsewhere". The 43-page report, entitled "The quiet deportation", charged that the Interior Ministry was implementing its new policy of taking away the right of Palestinians to live in Jerusalem by enforcing the Law of Entry into Israel which considered Palestinian residents of the city as immigrants. The report remarked that considering East Jerusalem residents as foreigners who entered Israel was perplexing, since it was Israel which had entered East Jerusalem in 1967. The report stated that, since 1967, the Interior Ministry had recognized de facto the residency right of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem who had moved to the territories or

stayed abroad for long periods, as long as they returned to Jerusalem to renew their permits on time. Nowadays, however, the Ministry was taking away their right to live in Jerusalem and was retroactively applying its new policy to persons who had innocently planned their lives according to the previous policy. The report's authors protested that the Interior Ministry had never warned East Jerusalem holders of Israeli blue identity cards that they risked losing their identity cards when moving to the territories (including the suburbs around Jerusalem). "Because of lack of clarity of the new policy", the report charged, "tens of thousands of Palestinians live in uncertainty as to their status and future in the city". The report's authors also protested against the discrimination between Palestinian permanent residents of East Jerusalem and other permanent residents who had moved to live in settlements in the territories without losing their rights. The report observed that the reason why thousands of Jerusalem Arabs had chosen to live outside the city's borders was not voluntary but the result of Israeli building policies. The report stated that in comparison with the massive construction for the Jewish population, few buildings were constructed for Palestinians, and mostly by private construction. The report stated that as a result of that policy, the housing shortage among the Palestinian population of Jerusalem currently exceeded 20,000 housing units, raising rental prices in the Arab areas. B'tselem estimated that 70,000 Palestinians with Israeli identity cards were living outside Jerusalem and could therefore lose their residency rights. The Interior Ministry countered the charges contained in the report, noting that Jerusalem residents had the right to apply for Israeli citizenship and those who had not taken it fell under the regulations concerning all other permanent residents who lived in the State of Israel. The Ministry estimated that 600 Palestinians had lost their identity cards by living outside Jerusalem or by taking foreign citizenship. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 8 April)

386. On 10 April, it was reported that the development department of the Ministry of Industry and Trade had begun works aimed at expanding the Barkan industrial zone by 520 dunums. The Barkan industrial zone, located near the Ariel settlement, was believed to be the largest Israeli industrial zone in the West Bank. (Ha'aretz, 10 April)

387. On 11 April, it was reported that half of the land owned by the villages of Um Tuba and Sur Baher on the southern outskirts of Jerusalem had been marked off as green areas under the master plan of Jerusalem Municipality. The land was adjacent to Jabal Abu Ghneim, where Israel has begun to establish the building of a new settlement, Har Homa. (The Jerusalem Times, 11 April)

388. On 17 April, it was reported that the peaceful protesters atop Jabal Deek had reached the end of their first month. The Palestinian camp was set up on Jabal Deek as collective peaceful protest in response to Israel's settlement policy which planned to turn the neighbouring Jabal Abu Ghneim hill into a Jewish settlement. (The Jerusalem Times, 17 April)

389. On 24 April, clashes broke out between IDF soldiers and Palestinian demonstrators who tried to prevent Gush Katif settlers from expanding their settlement on Palestinian land near Khan Younis. Soldiers reportedly opened fire at the demonstrators and made several arrests. (Ha'aretz, 25 April)

390. On 25 April, it was reported that Israel was going ahead with plans to clear several Palestinian areas of their Bedouin population. The areas affected were the Jordan Valley and the terrain around Khan Al Ahmar, on the eastern outskirts of Jerusalem. Some 122 Bedouin families had been served with notices over the previous two weeks. In the Jerusalem area, the Sawahrah Arabs had been instructed to leave the grazing fields they used in the Khan Al Ahmar area on the Jerusalem-Jericho road which was adjacent to the Maaleh Adumim settlement. Israel also made moves to evict the Bedouin population of Ta'amreh and Rashaideh in the area south-east of Bethlehem. In the Jordan Valley, IDF served eviction notices to 20 families living in makeshift shelters in the area of Tamoun. The soldiers then tore down their shelters. The shepherds were also ordered to hand in their identity cards. (The Jerusalem Times, 25 April)

391. On 28 April, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip held demonstrations near the Kfar Yam settlement in order to protest against the confiscation of Palestinian-owned land in order to allow for the construction of ramparts around the Gush Katif settlements. The ramparts were to protect the settlements in the event of attacks by Palestinians. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 29 April)

392. On 30 April, it was reported that the Civil Administration had advertised a project aimed at expanding the Efrat settlement by some 220 dunums. A woman, a member of the Efrat Council, stated that in 1991 the settlement had received 5,000 dunums of state-owned land from the Government. She indicated that only 1,000 had been developed so far, apart from some 500 dunums which were being developed on Har Hazayit. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 1 May)

393. On 30 April, it was reported that the Defence Ministry had prepared a plan amounting to more than US$ 1 billion for the construction of new bypass roads in the autonomous areas and the West Bank. Further confiscation of Palestinian land was to be expected in case the plan was approved. Avi Benayahu, media coordinator for Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, refused to comment on the report, stating only that since the Madrid Conference and Oslo talks, a network of bypass roads had been planned in order to solve security problems and prevent friction between Israelis and Palestinians. (Ha'aretz, 30 April; Jerusalem Post, 1 May)

394. On 30 April, the Government of Israel gave the green light to settlers in the Bethlehem area to expand the Efrat settlement at the expense of the villages of Al Kadr and Artas. Israel also began expanding the Adam settlement on the north-eastern outskirts of Jerusalem at the expense of the villages of Hizma and Anata. In a separate development, it was reported that Israel had agreed to halt plans to expand the Kfar Yam settlement and to remove the dirt mounds it had piled up at the Tuffah checkpoint which separates the town of Khan Yunis from the Mawasi enclave. The enclave leads into the Israeli-controlled settlement area of Gush Katif. (The Jerusalem Times, 2 May)

F. Information concerning the occupied Syrian Arab Golan

395. On 6 January, deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush announced a decision to allow the construction of an additional 200 housing units in the Katzrin settlement in 1997. The planned housing project was in addition to both the 96 housing units that had been put out to tender a week before and to the plans for the construction of 35 housing units as part of the build-your-home project. The head of the Katzrin Local Council expressed confidence that the planned housing units would be in high demand. Benefits for settlers in the Golan Heights included bonuses amounting to NIS 50,000, as well as advantageous mortgages of up to 95 per cent of the asset value. There were reportedly some 500 housing units in the planning and construction stages in the Katzrin settlement. (Ha'aretz, 7 January)

396. On 18 January, the French daily newspaper Le Figaro quoted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as stating that the future of the Golan was not negotiable. In an interview with the newspaper, Mr. Netanyahu stated that the Golan Heights had to remain under Israeli control because of its strategic, historical and economic importance. (Jerusalem Post, 19 January)

397. On 23 January, it was reported that the police and the General Security Service had arrested five Druze from the Golan Heights on suspicion of being behind a recent wave of arson attacks in the region, including two incidents in which petrol bombs had been thrown at IDF patrols. The suspects, who were from the Majdal Shams village, had been arrested two weeks before, but the Acre Magistrate's Court had imposed a publicity ban on the case. The ban was lifted on 22 January when police affirmed that the five suspects, two of whom were juveniles, had confessed to involvement in the nationalistic attacks. (Jerusalem Post, 23 January)

398. On 13 February, Syrian flags were raised over schools and houses in the Golan Heights villages of Majdal Shams, Bukata and Mas'ada as residents prepared to mark the anniversary of their 1982 general strike against Israel's annexation of the Golan and their being issued with Israeli identity cards. Schools in the villages were closed as dozens of pupils took part in a parade in the main square of Majdal Shams. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 14 February)

399. On 14 February, Golan Heights Druze marked the 15th anniversary of their general strike against the extension of Israeli law to the region. Shops, schools and businesses in the villages were closed and most of the residents did not go to work. Police were on duty in Majdal Shams and other villages in case of disturbances, but the day passed quietly. On the Syrian side of the border opposite Majdal Shams, a stage was erected and Druze and Syrian officials shouted messages of support and encouragement to the residents of the Golan Heights village. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 16 February)

400. On 2 March, it was reported that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had agreed to President Bill Clinton's personal request made during their White House meeting in February to recognize Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 as being applicable to the Golan Heights. According to political sources, however, Mr. Netanyahu added a proviso to his concession: that Israel retain its traditional interpretation of the resolution, that is,

that it meant to relinquish some but not necessarily all of the territory. By contrast, Yitzhak Rabin had informed President Clinton a few years before that he would cede the entire Golan up to the 4 June 1967 border lines under adequate security arrangements. Syrian officials insisted that such a commitment had been conveyed to them by Israeli interlocutors and therefore constituted an agreement. Mr. Netanyahu, however, has firmly rejected any return to those borders. (Jerusalem Post, 2 March)

401. On 23 March, a resident of Majdal Shams village was arrested on suspicion of throwing a firebomb a day earlier at an IDF jeep near what is known as the Shouting Hill, on the outskirts of that Golan Heights village. The suspect was interrogated by security personnel and admitted to throwing the firebomb. (Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, 24 March)